Philosophical Perspectives

A SELECTION OF ESSAYS

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BY

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IN LOVING MEMORY OF MY PARENTS

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PREFACE

The desire to bring out a collection of papers previously published in various books and journals was felt for a long time. But preoccupation with other books stood in the way. Meanwhile, an incurable and progressive type of arthritis made impossible all kinds of reading and writing without some help. Fortunately, a son-in-law, Dr. A. M. Goon of Presidency College, Calcutta, agreed to give the much needed help during his visits to Santiniketan. So it has been possible to revise and edit for the press this short selection of sixteen papers which once attracted the attention of scholars, and which may also be thought to be of contemporary interest.

Fortunately also, encouragement came from Sri M. M. Bose, Director, Bharati Bhawan, who had previously published a *festschrift* presented to me by Bihar Darshan Parishad. He readily agreed to publish the work. I am grateful to him and his colleagues, who have given the best of attention for bringing out the book in a suitable form.

Cordial thanks are due also to my esteemed friend, Professor N. A. Nikam (ex-Vice Chancellor, Mysore University), for sending me the copy of a paper which was lost by me, and also for giving me permission, as past Secretary of the Indian Philosophical Congress, to re-publish the papers which had appeared in the *Proceedings* of the Congress and its organ, *The Philosophical Quarterly* (now defunct), during his long tenure. For similar permission I am thankful also to the editor of the University of Hawaii journal, *Philosophy East and West*; to Messrs. G. Allen and Unwin Ltd., London; to Messrs. Macmillan and Co., New York; and to Sri Kshitis Roy, editor of *Liebenthal Festschrift* (Sino-Indian Studies, Vol. V, Parts 3 and 4). Professor S. C. Chakravarti of Visva-Bharati University very kindly procured for me the reprints of some of the papers, for which I am grateful to him. I am grateful also to Professor S.K. Ghosh of the same University for his help in correcting the proofs.

The papers cover a large variety of subjects, all discussed in wide philosophical perspectives; hence the title. The collection is divided into four sections, namely: (1) Logic and Metaphysics, (2) Religion and Morality, (3) Society and Culture; and (4) India's Debt to Other Lands. The date and place of previous publication are given at the end of each paper.

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1

LOGIC AND METAPHYSICS

The Logic of Scientific Verification

It is very often argued by some that the truth of the Freudian theory stands proved by its successful application to the treatment of mental diseases. In a similar way, other kinds of persons have argued in the past that astrology is vindicated by its successful predictions, the homoeopathic system of treatment by its innumerable cures, and science, in general, by its power of successful prediction and application. The process of reasoning underlying such contention is that the truth of an hypothesis is established by its successful verification. It is the object of this paper to point out briefly a common fallacy involved in such thinking and, incidentally, the real value of verification.

The word verification is derived from Latin '*verus*', which means truth. Most probably, this leads persons to believe that, if an hypothesis is verified, its truth is established thereby. It is not realized that there are different kinds and degrees of verification, and truth is not established in all cases straightway. Hypothesis may be about a perceptible fact. As for example, by looking at a withering creeper one may suppose that its roots have been cut. This supposition or hypothesis about the cause of the withering can be verified by inspecting the roots and finding them actually cut. In such a case what the hypothesis supposes is itself perceived to be true. The hypothesis can, therefore, be said to be directly verified here (verified in cash, as William James used to say), and its truth is established.

But in most cases hypothesis consists in supposing some imperceptible or unperceived cause, law, collocation or process. The unconscious 'libido' of the Freudian, the '*similia similibus curantur*' law of the homoeopath, the stellar influence of the astrologer, or the law of gravitation formulated by ordinary science, are all hypotheses about the imperceptible. No direct verification establishing their truth by perception is possible here. We can only try to verify them indirectly by observing *perceptible* consequents that can be expected to be perceived if they are true. But supposing that such expected effects are

observed, can we conclude that the hypotheses are true? Ordinarily, one would be apt to think that they are. But such a conclusion would be logically precarious, so long as there remains the possibility of a plurality of causes producing effects of the same kind, same at least to perception. If H stands for an hypothesis and C for its expected perceptible effect, and if on perceiving C one concludes that H is true, the formal process representing his argument would be : If H, then C; C is; therefore, H is. It will be at once found that there is the fallacy of affirming the consequent or what modern logic designates as the confusion between a proposition and its complementary.[1]

It may be argued, against such criticism, that the doctrine of the plurality of causes is itself unsound and that though different causes (say, different kinds of germs of disease) may apparently seem to produce the same kind of effect (say, fever), yet closer observation will disclose that the effect of each possesses some distinctive marks also along with the general ones (say, the fever caused by each kind of germ has a special time, range and nature of rise and fall). Though this reply may be theoretically acceptable, it is not of much practical use in cases like the ones cited above. One cannot, for example, feel sure that the cure of insanity following psycho-analytic or homoeopathic treatment, or the happening of a predicted event after a special stellar conjunction is of such a nature that it could be produced only by those antecedents, and not by any of the other conditions accompanying the antecedents, such as changes in food, climate, environment and the like. The doubt, therefore, cannot be so easily removed, and the hypothesis concerned cannot be established to be true.

What further complicates matters is that in most cases the verification of an hypothesis about the imperceptible can be effected only through a long chain of antecedents and consequents. If this hypothesis is true, then a consequent like C can be expected, and if C happens, it will cause another consequent D, and if D happens it will generate E, but E is observed; therefore, the hypothesis is true. Put symbolically, such an argument will be as follows. If H, then C; if C, then D; if D,

1. *Vide* W. E. Johnson, *Logic*, Part III, p. 55.

then E; now E is; therefore, H is. To make it more concrete, if the civilized son wishes the father to be dead, the wish will be tabooed by the censor; if it be tabooed, it will be repressed to the unconscious; if it is repressed, it can be expressed in a symbolic dream like the collapse of the upper storey of the house; and such is really the dream of James; therefore, James wishes his father dead.[2] It will be realized at once how precarious such a conclusion is. As we proceed backward from each consequent to its antecedent, we expose ourselves to the fallacy of affirming the consequent at every step, and the chance of reaching back to the true antecedent diminishes progressively with the increase of the number of links, as will be more clearly seen hereafter.

The purpose of this criticism is not, however, to underrate the value of the process of verification, but only to remove the exaggerated notion of its demonstrative value. The real value of verification consists in its capacity for generating a greater degree of certainty, making the hypothesis verified only more *probable*. When verification is by direct perception of the very phenomenon supposed by the hypothesis, as in the example of the withering creeper cited above, the probability of the hypothesis being true is *cent per cent*, provided of course we do not doubt the veracity of normal perception. This is the ideal limit of verification. But in cases of indirect verification the degree of probability must necessarily fall short of complete certainty. Even in a very simple case, if from H C is expected, and C is observed by the verifying process to be actually there, the probability of H being true is only $\frac{1}{2}$ or 50%, if there is the possibility of even *one* other (independent) way in which C may be caused. But in most cases there may be two, three or even more other ways in which C may be caused, and the probability thus attained by verification in such cases would be only $\frac{1}{3}$, $\frac{1}{4}$ or even less.

Consider in this way the probability attained by the verification of an hypothesis by a series of indirect steps, as in the example of the dream cited above, the formal argument of which was symbolically represented as : If H then C, if C then D,

2. Cf. Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, for a similar dream (p. 305, of *The Basic Writings* of Sigmund Freud).

if D then E; E is, therefore, H is. It will be found possible in such a case to explain each consequent in more than one way. In fact, the last consequent, the dreaming of the collapse of the upper storey can be explained in many more ways. But even if we take the most modest view and can entertain the possibility of explaining each consequent only in *one* other way, the probability of H being true will be $\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{2}$ or $\frac{1}{8}$ only. It will at once appear how poor the probative value of a process of so-called scientific verification may at times be. A scientist, not to mention the semi-scientist and pseudo-scientist, can be deceived into a sense of complacency by the long and arduous chain of experiments by which his hypothesis is verified, while in point of fact he has been travelling only farther and farther from complete certainty.

It should be mentioned, however, that even indirect verification can generate complete certainty, if it is known that the antecedent which we infer from the consequent is the only cause of that consequent. The formal argument then will be : Only if H then C; C is, therefore, H is. No fallacy will arise here, just as no fallacy arises when we simply convert a universal affirmative, the subject and predicate of which are known to be equi-pollent (e.g., All men are rational animals). In terms of the language of inductive logic, this amounts to the statement that if all rival hypotheses have been *exhaustively eliminated*, one can infer that the hypothesis in question is the only explanation of the consequent. Full certainty will, therefore, be enjoyed in such a case by the inference from consequent to antecedent. The aim of every science is such exhaustive elimination; but in point of fact, in most respects, even the most firmly held doctrines of science fall far short of this ideal. The possibility of rival theories can never be exhausted. The proof of the truth of a theory based on indirect verification is, therefore, always open to the danger of the formal fallacy of affirming the consequent.

It may be felt that in all the previous arguments, while criticizing the fallacious nature of reasoning from consequent to antecedent, we have assumed the consequent to be the effect, and the antecedent (supposed by the hypothesis) to be the cause.

But the relation between the logical antecedent and the logical consequent in a formal reasoning like "if H, then C," is one of implication, and such a relation may exist either between a cause and its effect, or between an effect and its cause (or a part of the cause), or between two co-effects, or between any two phenomena known otherwise to be related by some necessary relation. Does the fallacy arise in all such cases? We should, therefore, consider also these other cases. Let us call the imperceptible factor, supposed by the hypothesis, *x*. Now, can we infer *x* from the perceived C, if C is the cause of *x*? We can, if we can feel sure that C is the cause of *x* in the sense of being the sole and sufficient condition of the happening of *x*. But such a cause can nowhere be found except in the full sum of positive and negative conditions necessary for generating *x*, and we can never be sure, in any particular case, of the presence of all conditions which combined together bring about *x*, and sure also of the absence there of all conditions the presence of any or some of which will frustrate the happening of *x*. Consequently, in any actual case we never eliminate doubt completely when we infer from C to *x*. And if C is admittedly only a part of the cause of *x*, then the inference will clearly be precarious. If, again, the relation between C and *x* be that of co-effects, such a relation, being dependent ultimately on a causal relation, will be liable to the same objections. As for some other kind of necessary relation between C and *x*, we cannot think of any, if C and *x* represent two *different* spatio-temporal *facts*. Necessary relations (even if they are admitted, disregarding Schiller's wholesale denial of them) can be conceived only between *a priori* ideas, and not among empirical facts. The most intimate and reliable relation in the region of facts is of the causal type, or some other relation based on it. Therefore, we cannot here hope for anything more reliable.

We find then that we cannot have any absolute certainty from any kind of verification, if it is indirect. The maximum probability attained by such verification cannot be more than fifty *per cent*. This calculation, of course, presupposes that the other way in which a consequent, *x*, can be explained is expected to be as frequent as the first. Moreover, such calculation

presupposes also what J. M. Keynes[3] pointed out to be the assumptions behind all scientific procedure, namely, the *Principle of Limited Independent Variety*, and the *Principle of Atomic Uniformity*. If, however, any of these assumptions be not made, the probability cannot be calculated, though there would remain still the vague doubt or feeling that the consequent in question might be otherwise caused or accounted for.

We may consider one more point before we conclude. Does not the probability of an hypothesis, say H, increase if, not one, but many consequents which can be expected to follow from it, say $f_1, f_2, f_3 \ldots f_n$, are all actually observed ?[4] The answer must be in the affirmative. It must be admitted that the probability of an hypothesis goes on increasing with the number of expected consequents observed. For, this is really the process by which rival hypotheses are eliminated. Another hypothesis, H_2, can perhaps explain f_1 and f_2, but not f_3, nor f_4. We are entitled to reject H_2 with formal rigour since the denial of a consequent enables us to deny its antecedent. For an example, if the earth were like an ellipsoid in shape, rather than like a globe, we could quite explain why a ship sailing in the same direction should come back to the starting point, but it could hardly explain why the shadow of the earth seen during a lunar eclipse is *always* observed to be circular and never to be elliptical. Therefore, the rival hypothesis is rejected as being incompatible with this crucial observation. Similarly, the supposition that the earth is like a flat plate cannot explain why a ship sailing away from the observer should gradually disappear, bottom first and top last, though it may explain the circular shadow. But the hypothesis of the earth being a globe explains all of the many expected facts, and, therefore, it is far more probable than these rival suppositions.

But even this relative increase of probability does not amount to absolute certainty. The formal argument behind it is : If H, then $f_1, f_2, f_3, \ldots, f_n$, but $f_1, f_2, f_3 \ldots, f_n$ are (all observed); therefore, H is. We have here the same precarious conclusion,

3 In his *A Treatise on Probability*.
4. *Vide* L. S. Stebbing, *A Modern Introduction to Logic*, p. 306.

open to the fallacy of affirming the consequent (and thence the antecedent). The factual or material significance of this situation is that there remains still the possible doubt that there perhaps may be another hypothesis which can explain the whole of f_1, f_2, f_3, ... , f_n. Such a doubt is countenanced by the constant progress of science itself, from less satisfactory to more satisfactory hypotheses. The Copernican hypothesis explains all that the Ptolemaic one tried to account for, and also certain other newly observed facts which the earlier theory did not consider. Thus indirect verification always falls short of complete certainty.

To remember this is to give up the air of cock-sureness and self-sufficiency which often characterize the assertions of many scientific writers of to-day, and it is to retain the Newtonian humility of a genuine scientific mind, which does not shut the door to unseen possibilities and, therefore, to further progress.

(First published in *The Philosophical Quarterly*, Amalner, 1944.)

An Argument for the Unknown

Whatever else human knowledge may be, it is certain that, to be worth the name, it must be awareness of something which is new in some respect or other. Because human knowledge which comes into existence at a particular time must be non-existent previously, and the object (in the particular aspect) revealed by knowledge must, therefore, be unknown during that previous period of non-existence of knowledge. Calling this object or its particular aspect which was not known previously, the unknown, we can ask the question: What is the nature of the unknown? How can this question be answered?

Some would suggest that the unknown is the cause of the known, and as the cause must somehow contain the effect, the unknown must be *like* the known. But even if this argument is granted, a further question may be asked to ascertain the exact meaning of the answer. Does it mean that the cause, the unknown, is wholly identical with its effect, the known, or that it is *not* wholly so? The first meaning is not acceptable because it would imply that the process of causation does not make *any* change and this would make the idea of causation inconceivable and, therefore, *nullify* the above causal argument. The second meaning, which alone remains, would imply *some* difference at least between the cause and the effect and, therefore, between the unknown and the known. It has to be admitted, therefore, that to the extent, or in the aspect, that the cause is different, the unknown must be wholly unknown. The conclusion that is forced on us is that some element *must remain unknown.* Its nature is not at all ascertainable by this causal argument; and if no other method of ascertainment is available, this unknown has to be accepted as unknowable as well.

But we can anticipate here an objection against this conclusion. One can point out that in so far as the unknown is at least regarded as *the cause* of the knowledge of an object, it is so far known, and is not wholly unknown nor unknowable.

But this objection is not insuperable. Our notion of causality is derived from the observation of a certain relation among two *known* objects and it is applicable primarily to the realm of the known. It is only by force of analogy that we come to think of the unknown as the *cause* of the known. Such thought is, therefore, hypothetical. That is to say, *if* we are to think of the unknown on the analogy of the known, the former could be regarded as the cause. Causality is, therefore, only a symbolic description of the unknown, based purely on an analogy. That there must be something before knowledge arises, that it must be connected and continuous with the arising of knowledge—all these are ultimately based upon the notion of causal relation observed in the realm of objects known. And even if the idea of causality be *a priori* and necessary, as Kant holds, it would only mean that we cannot *experience or know* objects without applying this idea; it would not follow that what is *not known* must also be a cause.

From this causal line of inquiry into the nature of the unknown we can turn to an epistemological one. One can suggest that to be an object of knowledge, something, say a table, must obey the laws of thought and the conditions which make knowledge possible. So even while the table is unknown it must possess these characteristics with the help of which we can describe it. It is not, therefore, unknowable. But here, as before, it is possible to object that to describe the object before it has entered knowledge in terms of the forms it assumes when it enters knowledge is only a retrospective description, and we can never feel certain that it does really apply, any more than we can be sure that since the water which enters a tube is circular it must be circular even before it enters the tube, or that because a table looks red when it is seen through red glasses it must be red in itself. The whole point at issue is whether from the fact that something expresses itself in a particular form we can say that it must always be of that form. At best, we can say that it is capable of expressing itself in that form. But this amounts to saying little more than that it assumes that form when it enters knowledge. How can we then ascertain the nature of an object before it enters knowledge? Does not this seem to be unknowable?

This scepticism does not affect our practical life. For practical purpose, we can describe an object retrospectively, and call the unknown state of the thing also a table. But such convenient fiction does not remove our theoretical doubt. Of course, if one is pragmatic enough to identify truth with practical utility, the difficulty would not arise. But one who does not do so fails to get rid of this doubt.

Some acute thinkers would point out that such scepticism is based on an undue assumption. The question regarding the nature of the unknown can arise only if one assumes the existence of the unknown. But if the unknown is really so, you cannot even know that it exists, or that it is the previous state of the known. Unfortunately, this very legitimate contention, *far from removing doubt, deepens scepticism. For,* whereas there is no proof for the existence of the unknown, neither is there any proof for its non-existence. Idealism proves too much when it denies the existence of the unknown simply because its existence cannot be proved. Realism also proves too much when it affirms the existence of something whose non-existence cannot be proved. The only rational attitude of the mind in such a circumstance is to suspend judgement. So, ultimately, the doubt about the nature of the unknown envelops even its existence. The unknown thus turns out to be absolutely indefinite, and nothing can be predicated of it since its existence itself is doubted, though not disproved.

We cannot, therefore, avoid the indefinite. It is like the shadow lying in the background of whatever emerges in our knowledge in a definite form. Practical life is interested only in the definite, and our attention, therefore, turns towards it, turning its back on the indefinite. When, for example, we are asked to imagine something, and we imagine a golden mountain, we feel that this definite object emerges out of an indefinite background. It was possible for us to imagine any other object, and it is by rejecting all other possible alternatives that we entertain this particular image. Imagination of a definite object involves, therefore, withdrawal of attention from the rest and selection out of what is not previously of any definite character, that is out of the indefinite. In a similar way,

perception also involves selection of an undefined background out of which the perceived emerges in a definite form. So also do we find when we speak really *extempore*. Ideas and words spring into existence and assume definite forms out of what was previously formless. In fact, round about every sort of definite consciousness there is always the indefinite. That the awareness of the definite involves an awareness of its limit and an awareness of its emerging by concentration and withdrawal of attention from other indefinite possibles, cannot be ignored.

It is true that we cannot discover the indefinite by turning our positive attention away from the definite, any more than we can discover the darkness at the back of a searchlight by turning it round. Whichever way attention is positively turned, there would emerge a definite object, just as wherever the searchlight is focussed, some object or other comes to light instead of some speck of darkness. Attention reveals definite objects one after another out of the dark indefinite that lies all round.

A view such as this will be unacceptable to the positivist whose attention is always fixed on the positive objects emerging in experience. It will be repugnant also to the Hegelian panlogist who equates reality to the logical or the rational, leaving no room for the non-rational, unknown or the indefinite. We shall briefly consider their objections here.

Out of the positivist's arguments we shall select here the most recent and the most radical one, namely, that to talk of the unknowable is to talk of the meaningless. Every word, the logical positivist points out, stands for some positive, experienced fact, and so the word unknowable cannot correspond to any such fact and is, therefore, devoid of meaning. Even if this argument is accepted, its effect on the point at issue would be that the unknowable is inexpressible in words. But is there any reason to make us think that the expressible exhausts the whole domain of possibles ? On the contrary, do we not find that even certain definite facts of experience (e.g. the exact character of a bodily feeling, or of a joy, or a sorrow) though clearly felt cannot be expressed in language ? The word, unknowable, or indefinite, suggests to us something

other than the knowable or the definite and it conveys a meaning other than a positive one. In other words, it only points to the necessity of recognizing a negative function of meaning, in addition to the ordinary positive one—a meaning obtained by negation of the positive and the definite.

Turning to the panlogist, we meet with a host of objections. We may refer the reader for this purpose to an article contributed in the July, 1942 number of the *Review of Philosophy and Religion* by Mr. A. C. Mukherji, under the title 'Reality and Rationality', where he will find an account of the usual objections. It will be convenient for us to select some of the basic arguments from this paper and consider their effect on the present thesis. Mr. Mukherji will strongly remind one of the confident Hegelian flourishing a quarter of a century ago and believing that the mystery of the universe has been solved once for all, and that one has only to 'comprehend' and 'propagate' the truth. Blindness to some necessary, transcendental principles, he thinks, 'leads to the unnecessary multiplication of philosophical systems' (p. 8). He tries to show how Plato, Kant, Bradley, Bergson and some others miss the truth owing to the partial or complete 'transcendental blindness'.

One of these transcendental principles is the one Kant brought into prominence, namely, that 'concepts which make experience possible are on that very ground necessary'. But Kant did not fully realize the implication of this principle or he would not speak of the unknowable, which Mr. Mukherji, like so many other critics of Kant, feels sure, is inconsistent with this principle. The inconsistency, which has not been explicitly demonstrated by him, is generally shown thus: You cannot speak of the unknowable unless it is an object of your knowledge, and if it is an object of knowledge it ceases to be unknowable. Is such an argument really sound ? If it were so, you could never say about anything that you do not know it. For, at once the objection could be raised: If you did not really know the thing how could you even know and say that you do not know *it* ? And thus finally you would be led to the paradox that you must know what you do not know. A paradox like this can be accepted only if the word 'know' bears two

different senses, or it would be an open contradiction. Then surely the sense or respect in which the thing is unknown is not the very sense or respect in which it can be said to be known. For Kant, the thing-in-itself is unknown and unknowable in the sense that it cannot be expressed in terms of space, time and categories. It cannot be said to be known or knowable in this sense unless we identify it completely with that *which has actually entered* sense-experience.

Though Mr. Mukherji is not prepared to accept the distinction between the knowable and the unknowable (p. 15), he does believe in the distinction between absolute truth and human truth in certain respects, and that the former is realized in human knowledge (p. 20). What could we say of the unrealized aspect of the Absolute truth ? If it is also known in the sense in which the realized aspect is, the distinction between the two would be unintelligible. And if it is not so known, then the unrealized Absolute is beyond such human knowledge. To apply to it the principles that govern the *entering* and *expression* of the absolute in human knowledge would be, as we tried to show in the earlier part of the paper, taking a step the infallibility of which cannot be guaranteed by reasoning. The unrealized will thus remain unascertainable and so unknowable.

But how can we think of the unknowable ? Is it not necessary that whatever enters thought must obey the logical laws of thought ? But can we not similarly ask the question, how can we speak and think of the contradictory ? It is not surely because the contradictory obeys the principles of thought, for then it would be no longer contradictory. This should open our eyes to the fact that thought can be aware, though in two different ways, as much of what accepts the yoke of its laws as of what rebels against it or eludes its grasp. It is the latter sort of experience which makes thought aware of its limit and points to something beyond.

If you confine, however, the word 'thought' to logical consciousness, that is, consciousness which obeys the laws of consistency, you must admit some other kind of consciousness which presents the illogical, contradictory stuff to thought and which thought fails to reduce into its own form, that is,

into a consistent system. If the texture of the human mind were *wholly* logical or rational, the long-drawn moral and intellectual efforts to rationalize life and mind would remain unexplained. The irrational character of the human mind which has gradually to be broken to the reins of reason with great difficulty clearly points to the irrational or the illogical, which *may* accept the laws of logic, but is not rational *ab initio*. The frequent failure of the rationalizing process of thought (e.g. in cases of fallacious thinking) further makes it clear that thought's power of rationalizing our consciousness is not always sufficient. This would also show that even if consciousness be absolute, it is not wholly rational.

But is it not contradictory to think of the irrational? Is not a philosophy which accepts the irrational self-contradictory? It would be so if to think of the irrational could be shown to be an illogical or contradictory process of consciousness. But it is not really so. To think of the irrational is not thinking irrationally, any more than to think of dreams is itself dreaming. In fact, Logic does and has to discuss all fallacies of thought, and in discussing them it does not surely become fallacious itself. The charge of inconsistency does not, therefore, apply to a philosophy which recognizes the irrational and, therefore, the limitation of logical thought. Of course, the philosophy that discusses the irrational must and does accept the laws of logical thought in discussing it. But the irrational which is discussed in a rational or logical way does not cease to be irrational, even as a dream being discussed does not cease to be a dream, or a philosopher's contradiction does not cease to be so when it is logically discussed by its critics.

From different lines of thought we can then come to the conclusion that human knowledge and logical thought are not absolute or all-inclusive and that, on the contrary, they are limited. The boundary is not, of course, fixed. It goes on being shifted as more of the unknown enters knowledge and becomes rationally systematized. The recognition of this limit is not self-contradictory, but is the result of logical processes of thought, and is, therefore, binding on thought if it is not to give up the game at the sight of its defeat or curtailment of its territory. The unknown is known as the *unknown* just as

the illogical is thought logically to be illogical. Knowledge or thought cannot say what lies beyond itself except that it is beyond knowledge. No judgement, no description is, therefore, possible of it. It has to be recognized as the utterly indefinite. To say that it is indefinite or indescribable is simply to state that it transcends the power of description and judgement. And if such a description be called a judgement, it will be nothing more than a judgement about the unjudgeable nature of the indefinite.

Now if 'absolute' be an all-inclusive term including all that we can refer to directly or indirectly, positively or negatively, we do not see how it can be definite, logical or rational through and through. In so far as this absolute enters the logical pale of our systematic thought, it surely assumes a logical character. But even the whole of what enters the human mind, we saw, is not logical, nor even wholly definite. Round about our clear consciousness of the definite there is always the fringe of the indefinite, and facing and coming up against the rational there is sometimes the irrational that baffles the rationalizing process of logical thought.

The position defended here is not absolute scepticism. It is only the recognition of the limits of human knowledge and logical thought. Philosophy, in so far as it plays the game of reasoning, must obey the laws of reasoning. But there is no reason why it should not bear in mind that it is a game after all and has its limits. The moral effect of such an attitude on philosophy would be humility leading to the dissolution of the all-sufficient cock-sureness which, more than anything else, is the source of philosophic pugnacity. It counsels patience and prepares the mind for *new* revelations, instead of making it legislate in advance that the unrevealed is of a piece with the revealed.

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The Objectivity of Philosophy

That the aim of philosophy has always been to attain objective certainty cannot be consistently denied even by a subjective sceptic. The very attempt of a subjectivist to prove his philosophy to others implies clearly that he does not remain satisfied simply by being himself sure of his conclusions, but wants it to be accepted by others as well. It is true that attainment of subjective certainty through systematic reasoning with one's own self is one of the functions of philosophical thinking. But it is equally true that even this subjective certainty is not assured unless it is felt that the reasoning is acceptable to other rational beings as well. We scarcely come across any philosopher who bases his conclusions on rational arguments without supposing at the same time a tribunal or at least an audience to whom he appeals or whom he attempts to refute and convince. It may be said on behalf of a subjectivist that the persons who form his audience or opponents are also in his mind. But this defence is of little help. The persons whom he seriously addresses are at least believed by him to have as much individuality as himself as the thinker and speaker and, therefore, two consequences would follow. First, his mind must be conceived as a community of several persons, and secondly, he must be other than the persons addressed and, therefore, the persons as his objects must be distinguished from himself as the knowing subject. But this only shows that even a subjective idealist wants his conclusions to be accepted by persons other than himself, and consequently even his philosophy aims at securing objective certainty. Without objectivity his philosophy would be little better than a soliloquy.

Some subjective idealists have held the opinion that the belief in anything other than the subject is a pathological state which has to be cured by spiritual discipline. But even they must admit that when that pathological belief is completely lost, there remains neither any need nor any possibility

of philosophy in so far as it involves the demonstration of some conclusion to anybody other than the subject.

Now if it be a fact that philosophy aims at objective validity, the next question that arises is: Can there be any objective philosophy at all? This question arises out of the following considerations. The philosophy of a thinker must necessarily be based on his *own* experience of facts. But as everybody's experience is peculiarly his own, and as everybody moves, therefore, within the enclosing walls of his own experience, how can a philosophy based on such experience be objective and common? Of the two kinds of objects of experience, the internal ones are extremely personal and peculiar; the external ones are ordinarily supposed to be common and public. But deeper reflection shows that even the experience of the so-called external objects is not really the same with all persons. Divergence of judgements regarding the nature, size, motion, etc., of external objects is a matter of daily occurrence. But even if we disregard it and consider only the cases of agreement and attempt to base a philosophy of the external world on experience of external objects that is universally agreed upon, our difficulty is not at all over. General agreement of opinions regarding facts is not always a safe index to the real nature of facts. Bacon long ago pointed out the existence of the *idola tribus*. These *idola* can, however, be removed by some means or other; otherwise it would not have been known that they are errors. But we shall point out with the help of a simple example a deeper difficulty which cannot be removed at all. English-speaking people all over the world may say that milk is white. But does it prove that all these persons perceive the *same* colour when they look at milk? The usual reply will be in the affirmative. But it is not one that can stand a closer scrutiny. Suppose two persons B and C who have just begun to learn English are shown an object by a person A, who knows the language already, and they are also told by him that the colour of the object is called white. Now suppose A perceives a colour w_1, B w_2, and C w_3, when the object is presented to them. Then B will connect the word 'white' with a sensation like w_2 and call all objects giving

rise to such a sensation, white. Similarly, C will call all objects causing a sensation like w_3, white. But A, the authority, means by white all colours having sensations like w_1. Now if such a thing happens when milk is presented to the three persons, they will all call them white, without meaning by the word the same kind of sensation: w_1, w_2 and w_3 may vary very widely from each other, still they may be called by the same name by different persons, only if the divergence is uniform. There is then no means of finding out the divergence because it will always remain hidden behind a common name. The reason why the error of a jaundiced person seeing a white thing yellow can be detected is that his sensation is not uniform. He does not have the same sensation from milk before and during his disease. If such a man had always the sensation y (what others call yellow), whenever he saw milk, then he would have associated from early childhood the name white with y, because an authority pointing to milk would direct him to call the colour of the perceived object white. Thus the deviation of his sensation from that of the authority would remain always undetected.

These considerations will go to prove that even where there is general agreement regarding the nature of external objects, this may mean nothing more than a merely verbal agreement and there may remain in spite of it a very wide divergence of experience. It is impossible, therefore, to find out elements of universal experience on which an objective philosophy of the external world can be based. The same thing can be said with greater force with regard to the subjective world. We thus come to realise the existence of a great difficulty that threatens the very possibility of philosophy: philosophy is nothing if it is not objective, but there is no sure means of finding out any common and universal experience on which such philosophy can be based. Either the dream of an objective philosophy must be given up or some basis other than experience must be found for it.

This dilemma would turn many a thinker into a sceptic and incline him to give up the philosophical quest for truth. But we do not think it to be an altogether hopeless situation. Though it is not possible to identify beyond doubt the

experience of one man with that of another, it is possible yet to correlate the one with the other with the help of words which serve as the common symbols for both. Even if we suppose, to turn back to the example already cited, that the colour experience of milk is not the same in every person and that it is w_1 with one, w_2 with another and w_3 with a third person, there can yet be correlation between the three through the common verbal symbol 'white'. And as the symbolic word is always associated with the same experience-meaning in each individual's mind, and as, therefore, each of the different experiences of the different individuals bears a constant relation to the same symbol, these different experiences, though not identical, will always bear constant relations among themselves. In fact, without such uniform interrelations it would have been impossible for different persons to evolve a common language for the exchange of thoughts. If A's experience of milk be m_1, B's m_2 and C's m_3, and if A's experience of white be w_1, B's w_2 and C's w_3, then the proposition "Milk is white" will mean to A "m_1 is w_1", to B "m_2 is w_2", and to C "m_3 is w_3." But in spite of these personal variations, the values of 'milk' and 'white' are such in each case as to make the proposition, "Milk is white", acceptable.

It follows, therefore, that in so far as there is verbal agreement among a group of persons there must be a sort of agreement of experiences as well. Though the experience-values of the agreed proposition may vary with different members of the group, yet the variation has got a definite range; it cannot be greater than what can make the proposition in question acceptable to each member.

Again, if this agreement is rightly understood, it cannot be called a merely verbal one. For though this agreement is obtained *through* words, it is not finished with words. A member of the group in question cannot seriously utter or assent to the words "Milk is white" unless the words have, in terms of his *experience*, meanings which can reasonably enable him to accept the proposition.

We see then that the objection of the subjectivist against the possibility of an objective philosophy is not insurmountable and there is no cause for despair. In spite of the variations of

experience, a common ground of experiential agreement is possible. This agreement is effected through words, which stand as common symbols. An objective philosophy is not, therefore, a hopeless task.

The basis of such philosophy is, of course, experience. But it is experience of a particular type. Two phases of experience have to be distinguished: (1) experience in its private, individual and unique aspect, in which it is not related to any word-symbols accepted by a society, and (2) experience in its public aspect, in which it is related to such symbols. Crass experience of the first kind is, by its very nature, unfit to become the basis of an objective philosophy. But symbolised experience of the second kind can furnish the necessary basis for it.

In plain words, a philosopher who wants to think out the philosophy of the whole world—subjective and objective—or a part of it, must, of course, study and systematize his own experience about the object of study and, in order to make it intelligible and acceptable to others and to secure for it objective validity, he must render his experience in terms of the universally accepted language of his society. The elements of his thinking, therefore, must be the items of his own experience symbolized by the words of the language of the society. The structure of his thinking must be after the valid forms of that language, i.e. in propositions allowed by the grammar, the idioms and the genius of the language. The validity of his philosophy must depend then on whether the symbolic expressions of his arguments and conclusions are such as can be evaluated in terms of their own individual experiences by other members of society and whether so evaluated the expressions are in perfect agreement with their experiences.

The philosopher's world of experience may not thus be identical with that of any of his audience. But it has an indirect but constant relation to it through his philosophy which consists of the verbal symbols of his experience. His philosophy is then to be conceived as an equation the terms of which have got *n* different values and it can, therefore, be satisfied in *n* different ways, *n* being the number of the

audience accepting his philosophy. The divergence of individual opinions and experiences does not make, therefore, an objective philosophy impossible. On the contrary, in spite of this divergence such a philosophy is possible. It will be, of course, a symbolic philosophy.

The method of this objective philosophy is, as will appear from the above, neither merely subjective nor merely objective. It is subjective and objective. Its subjective character consists in its reference to and evaluation in terms of the experience of the philosopher and its objective character is determined by its affiliation to forms and structures acceptable to other individuals of the society.

In its subjective aspect the method is primarily instrospective. But in its objective aspect it is inductive. If the problem for the philosopher be, for example, to ascertain the nature of a cause, the method of objective philosophy is to determine, first, what *he* means by the terms and, secondly, what others mean by it as they use it. He can find out his own meaning by the introspective analysis of his own ideas of cause. But he can find out the meanings that others attach to the term by collecting different uses of the term in different contexts by others and inductively ascertain the meaning or meanings that must be supposed so as to justify these uses. As the philosopher himself learns the use of the word from other members of the society, there must be a substantial correspondence between his meaning and the meanings of others. In fact, in ascertaining the meaning of the terms he may not always think explicitly of his own meaning separately from that of others, but may objectively consider how the word is used, by all including himself. In this way, by the combination of both the subjective and objective methods, the meaning of 'cause' is ascertained. The conception of 'cause' thus formed in the mind of the philosopher is not a merely subjective idea. But being based on the testimony of other members of the society, it is an idea which must possess some correspondence with their ideas as well. It can, therefore, be called an objective conception.

If the philosopher has no explicit and clear idea of the meaning in which he himself uses a particular term, he has

to employ the inductive method, instead of the introspective one, in order to ascertain the meaning in which he uses the word by recalling and comparing the different contexts in which he uses it. All persons use the words 'good' and 'bad' in passing moral judgements, but few have got any clear and precise idea of the meanings of the terms. In such a case, the philosopher has to use the inductive method to ascertain clearly his own meanings. By the same method he ascertains the meaning of other persons as well and comes to obtain the conceptions of good and bad which have objective validity.

It is found, therefore, that philosophy which aspires after objective validity has to analyse terms and propositions, compare and contrast them, ascertain their imports and draw legitimate inferences from them. Though it is thus directly concerned with language, it treats linguistic expressions as the symbolic representations of human experience, obtained through observation, experiment and other valid sources of knowledge. But in taking its texts from symbolized experience, all objective philosophy must believe in linguistic symbols to a certain extent as genuine representations of the experiences of other persons. It will imply, then, that belief in verbal testimony is a necessary presupposition of objective philosophy. This belief may be criticized as dogmatic.* But it is the necessary presupposition not only of philosophy, but even the possibility of all human conversation, and the formation of human society. Without this, human conversation, and along with it, all philosophical discussion will become meaningless and futile.

* For a defence of testimony, *vide* author's article 'Testimony as a Method of Knowledge', *Mind*, vol. xxxvi. N.S., No. 143 and author's book, *The Six Ways of Knowing* (Cal. Univ. Press).

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On Philosophical Synthesis

Through clash, strife, and increasing good sense the world's diverse peoples have been realizing that human survival is impossible without mutual understanding, reconciliation, and co-operation in all possible spheres.[1] The problem whether the various philosophical traditions of the world can be reconciled, and also synthesized into one world philosophy, has naturally acquired special importance. We shall briefly discuss the problem by clarifying first the logical issues involved in reconciliation and synthesis, with simple historical illustrations. No philosophical understanding, however urgent, can be reached if it is not logically acceptable.

I. The Logic of Reconciliation

Reconciliation means removal of conflict between two opposite claims. Synthesis means creation of something new out of two different things, not necessarily opposites. As we shall see, not every reconciliation need amount to a synthesis, and not every synthesis need arise from conflict, and is not, therefore, a reconciliation, though their spheres partly overlap.

Reconciliation is sought in philosophy when reason is confronted by two opposite theories (S is P, and S is not-P), answering the same question (e.g., "Does knowledge originate in sensation?" "Is change real?" "Is the will free?" "Does God exist?"). The attempt to overcome the conflict in such cases has been made in history, broadly, in six different ways:

1. By accepting one of the opposite theories as true and rejecting the other as false (S is P; S is not not-P)—the examples for which are too numerous to need mention.

2. By partial acceptance and partial rejection of both theories (some S is P and some S is not-P) —e.g., knowledge of external objects arises from sensation, but knowledge of

1. Cf. Charles A. Moore, "East-West Philosophy and World Understanding", *The American Review* (New Delhi), VI, No. 3 (April, 1963), 5, *et passim*.

the Infinite and Perfect does not (Descartes); change is real in respect of the relations among *ultimate elements*, but not in respect of the elements themselves (Empedocles and Vaiśeṣikas), etc.

3. By accepting both in a new light, realizing the *complementary natures of their inner truths (every S is both P and* not-P in different but inseparable respects)—e.g., every knowledge, *even of external objects, needs sensation (for its* matter) and also non-sensuous, *a priori*, contributions of the mind (Kant's reconciliation of Empiricism and Rationalism); every act of will is determined (by the self) and not determined (by external factors)—the reconciliation of determinism and libertarianism, etc.

4. By rejecting both (S is neither P nor not-P) as based on a common wrong presupposition, the correction of which is given as a new theory, e.g., Bergson's rejection of both mechanism and finalism as presupposing pre-determination (whether by antecedent cause or final end), which is corrected by his theory of creative evolution; similarly, William James's replacing pessimism and optimism by his theory of meliorism, etc.

5. By rejecting the underlying problem itself either as undecidable (as the Buddha does in respect of questions like "Is the world eternal ?"), or as illegitimate (as Kant does regarding questions like "Is the thing-in-itself one or many ?"), or as self-contradictory (as Śaṁkara does regarding, "Do I exist ?"), or as meaningless (as logical positivists do regarding all metaphysical questions).

6. And, lastly, by the self-abnegation of reason in favour of some superior self-manifest experience as a result of reason's realization that all philosophical questions and answers, though possessing practical value for everyday life, reveal inner contradiction on rigorous rational scrutiny. Resolution of conflict, through the confessed bankruptcy of reason and waking to a level of consciousness beyond all disputes, is variously illustrated by the destructive dialectics of Bradley, Nāgārjuna, and Śrīharṣa, which pave the way for an Immediate Pure Experience, the Buddhist *Śūnya* and the Vedāntic *Ātman*, respectively.

All of these six ways of overcoming philosophical conflict

are not cases of reconciliation. If the term also means that some elements of the conflicting theories are to be retained in reconciling them, then only the second and the third are cases of reconciliation proper. Of these two, again, only the third can be truly called a synthesis, because it does not simply combine, as in the second case (of mere eclecticism), but produces something new. But there are also cases of real synthesis, attained, not by way of reconciliation or overcoming of the conflict illustrated above, but by the spontaneous assimilation of various compatible ideas drawn from different theories, systems, and traditions.

II. Real Synthesis, Its Possibility and Desirability

Real philosophical synthesis is marked by inner harmony arising from a steady and consistent vision and the resultant attitude with which ideas are selected, interpreted, assimilated, and transformed into a new theory or system. Real synthesis is reflected in the integrated personality of the thinker whose emotional and volitional life is also harmoniously organized, and is in tune with his intellectual life. It is natural, therefore, that great and real synthesis has always taken place in history only in great minds who are also the great men of history. Their new ideas, born of synthesis, have spread as much through their teachings as through their lives, showing how to meet new challenges. It should be noted that everyone of them is deeply rooted in the native culture of his time, which he re-interprets and reforms with bold and superior insight that also enables him to receive the valuable and assimilable elements from alien sources. As every region of the world has had to pass through successive impacts with foreign cultures, such synthesis, as well as resolution of conflict, has been needed again and again; and their ability to undertake and undergo such a process of nourishment and gradual transformation has saved the regional cultures from extinction.

While such synthesis is a necessary, desirable, and healthy process, there are some undesirable phenomena of rootless universalism found in minds open enough to entertain ideas from different sources, but not able enough to sift, assimilate, and organize them into a coherent whole with the help of

any unifying principle of their own. Such an unassimilated plethora of multifarious elements may resemble synthesis; but it disrupts the personality and causes indecision in practical life. India has long suffered, since its intimate contact with the British, from such cultural malady, though it has been partly checked occasionally by some of its great synthetic personalities (such as Rammohan Roy, Vivekananda, Gandhi, Aurobindo, and Tagore),[2] who exemplified, for the people, true assimilation of valuable Western ideas, from different standpoints compatible with Indian culture. China has had that menacing problem; and history has yet to pass its verdict on its present attempt to graft, by quick pressure, Marxist-Leninist dialectical materialism on its Confucian-Taoist-Buddhist trunk. But this problem has now been assuming global proportions, and threatens also the European countries and the several regions of North and South America. With the rather sudden shrinking of the globe every region is being flooded with ideas from other regions, uprooting the old cultures and their respective disciplines, but generating no new ones.

This undesirable kind of confused intermingling often passes for synthesis, and it would justify the fears of Santayana[3] and the wise words of caution given by John Dewey[4] and K. C. Bhattacharyya[5] in respect of glib talk of synthesis. But a close student of Santayana can discover,[6] finely embodied in him, some insights of Indian thought which he believed he shared. Bhattacharyya's profound assimilation of European and Indian systems is the undeniable source of his own metaphysics. But real synthesis implies for him the assimilation of the foreign to one's own only where possible; and it is achieved, not by rejection of one's standpoint or ideal, but by deepening it with increasing reverence, through "infinite patience and humility", until what was foreign reveals its kinship with one's

2. See W. E. Hocking, "On Philosophical Synthesis," *Philosophy East and West*, II, No. 2 (July, 1952), 100; and D.M. Datta, "India's Debt to the West in Philosophy," *ibid.*, VI, No. 3 (October, 1956), 202-212.

3. See *Philosophy East and West*, I, No. 1 (April, 1951).

4. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

5. See his article, "Swaraj in Ideas," published posthumously, *Visvabharati Quarterly* (Santiniketan), XXV, Nos. 3 and 4 (August, 1960), 300.

6. E. g., in his *Scepticism and Animal Faith* (New York : Dover Publication, 1955), chap. VIII, *et passim*.

own. With such deepening "travail of the spirit" humanity can gradually progress toward "the unification of ideals" and "the emergence of a common reason".[7]

The possibility of East-West synthesis in philosophy has been doubted mostly on the wrong supposition that East and West are two simple units with opposite trends.[8] Even if this misconception, called by Dewey[9], a single "block" affair, were granted, there would be no logical difficulty in synthesis, as previously shown. In fact, on a similar supposition, others have thought the opposites can and should supplement each other.[10] The abiding greatness of Plato lies, according to Emerson,[11] in his "wonderful synthesis" of Eastern monism (imbibed in his Eastern travels) and Western pluralism. Dewey[12] has rightly pointed out that there are *not such things* as East and West to be synthesized. There are, instead, many regions, East and West, North and South, and each with diverse schools and trends. The regional traditions have mutual similarities as well as differences. Similars mutually support and strengthen each other. Impact of opposites provokes deeper self-searching and fresh thinking, leading sometimes to new synthesis, and sometimes to renewed or shifted emphasis. Comparative philosophy has been stimulating such interrelations, not only between "East" and "West" but also between different neighbouring regions themselves.

III. The Emergence of World Philosophy

It is by such intimate interrelation and possible synthesis that the prospect of the evolution of a "world philosophy" is increasing every day. For the growth of global philosophy two very important things needed are : a common culture,

7. *Op. cit.*, pp. 300 f.
8. G. Tucci, *Philosophy East and West*, II, No 1 (April, 1952) 3; and A. R. Wadia, *ibid.*, IV, No. 4 (January, 1955), 293.
9. *Op. cit.*
10. E.g., F. S. C. Northrop in *The Meeting of East and West* (New York : The Macmillan Co., 1946), *passim*; W. E. Hocking, *Philosophy East and West*, *op. cit.*; and E. A. Burtt, in Charles A. Moore, ed., *Philosophy and Culture—East and West* (Honolulu : University of Hawaii Press, 1962), p. 689
11. See *The Complete Prose Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, with a Critical Introduction by G. T. Bettany (London : Ward, Lock & Co., 1910), pp. 170-175.
12. *Philosophy East and West*, *op. cit.*

for reasons already explained, and a common language, because philosophy is inseparably tied to language with all its peculiar structure, idioms, fine distinctions of meanings, and nuances. The prospect for the first seems to be brighter. Though Santayana,[13] like Bergson, thinks that evolution tends toward increasing divergence, competent biologists, such as Julian Huxley and P. Teilhard, point out that after the diversification of the human race, this tendency has been reversed by "hominization" toward gradual convergence, and within "at most a few millennia" man "is destined to form but one cultural unit, supported by a single framework of general ideas and beliefs".[14] But the prospect for one language does not seem so bright, judged by current trends.

But what might be the general nature of "world philosophy" if all conditions were favourable? If past analogies are any guide, there would not be one unanimous philosophy, but a variety of alternative formulations out of the same common background of ideas and beliefs. For, so long as a philosopher is not de-individualized and is not omniscient, he will view the world from his own centre, choosing his own perspective, selecting his data and interpreting the universe in accord with his own metaphors. But he should be humble enough to appreciate the possibility of other kinds of philosophical formulation out of the common ideas and beliefs. The unity of such a world philosophy would be in the sense in which Indian or Chinese or Japanese or European philosophy is considered one. It would be a variety within one common matrix formed out of the integrated resources of all regional philosophies of the world. Differences would be narrowed down, and mutual understanding would immensely increase. But that is a distant Utopia.

As of now, philosophers, rooted in their respective regional cultures and philosophic traditions, can work for that ideal by assimilating from all other regions valuable ideas, from their respective standpoints, to widen, deepen, and enrich their thoughts, and to develop world perspectives by "cross-

13. *Philosophy East and West*, *op. cit.*

14. Huxley's article reviewing Teilhard's *Le Phénomène Humain* in *Encounter* (April, 1956), p. 86.

fertilization", as Radhakrishnan[15] aptly observes. There would thus be a variety of syntheses, but all of a global nature and capable of promoting better human understanding. Happily, there have been a growing number of philosophical talents with human sympathies to expand their regional horizons toward global dimensions. Paul Deussen, Karl Jaspers, William James, William Ernest Hocking, Nishida Kitarō, Hu Shih, Aurobindo, and Radhakrishnan are among the best known in different spheres.

15. In *Philosophy East and West*, I, No. 1 (April, 1951), p. 4.

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Philosophy of the Body: A New Approach to the Body Problem from Western and Eastern Philosophies

The body has been regarded, by some ancient thinkers of the East and the West, as the epitome of the universe. Yet it has seldom obtained the attention it deserves from modern philosophers. At any rate it has not received half the attention the soul has. But there is no doubt that it is of fundamental importance as much for a correct conception of the soul and the world, as for a *philosophical control of life*. The subject offers to us diverse vistas of interesting speculation. We shall attempt to follow some of these and present our ideas briefly in this paper.

I

Origin, Growth and Decay of the Body

Even if we start with the ordinary biological account of the origin of the body by the combination of two kinds of cells, we have to ponder over the long series of wonderfully regular and harmonious behaviour of the cells by which they combine together and select and assimilate from the environment those kinds and quantities of substances which would form a body possessing exactly the shape, colour, size, constitution and other peculiarities present in the race and the family of the parents. When, again, we consider the innumerable and nicely adjusted parts by the orderly growth of which each one of the highly complex organs like the eyes, the ears, the heart, the lungs, the digesting apparatus, etc., is constituted and consider also the general harmonious interrelation present among these different organs, we can scarcely think that the body comes into existence and develops by a series of happy accidents. We are forced to admit, unless we are too credulous or superficial, that the body could not grow and be what it is but for some inherent force which can initiate, control and co-ordinate the

various processes and direct them towards the realization of definite forms and ends by continuous selective effort. We have also to admit that the various materials which go to the formation of the body are controlled and organized by this force.

To say that all these intricate processes are due to heredity, is little more than giving a name to the controlling force without explaining it. But as in other cases, so also here, the technical name for the phenomenon is apt to pass for an explanation and dull further curiosity about it. Really, however, reflection on the meaning of heredity makes us think of the subtle, but wonderful force in the seed which selects from the environment at appropriate moments the exact material necessary for the constitution of the body of each of the innumerable members of the particular species and family, and organizes it and directs it in such a way that it grows, develops and decays in a particular manner, and also generates during its life the germs for the continuation of the individual through successive generations that last sometimes for thousands of years. Such and other implications of heredity all the more strengthen the view previously stated, namely, that the facts about the body cannot be explained away as a series of accidents. On the contrary, we feel justified in admitting the guiding influence of a subtle power behind the origin, growth and decay of the body as well as its work of reproduction.

A similar conclusion is also forced on us when we think of the numberless processes like chewing, salivation, peristaltic motion, secretion of bile and the gastric juices, assimilation, excretion, circulation of blood, breathing, oxygenation, defence, repair and the different kinds of reaction of the body to light, cold and heat, etc. These and other complicated processes without which neither the preservation of the body nor its successful adjustment to the environment would be possible require a harmonious co-operation among its different parts and accurate adjustment of long chains of means and ends which cannot be explained as chance coincidences.[1]

Such reflections on the origin, development and functioning

1. Refuting Dr. Julian Huxley's view, Sir Arthur Keith says : "Living protoplasm, even in its simplest form, is purposive, ...I feel certain.. . the genes themselves—.... are....purposive in their action", *Essays on Human Evolution*, pp. 14-15.

of the body cannot fail, then, to impress on us the lessons (1) that the subtle force inherent in the germ cell has wonderl power of organizing the material of which the perceptible ai gross body is found to be composed, and (2) that this force not blind, but purposive, its work being selection, regulati and continued evolution of means for meeting a series of ends

We may be reminded here of the general Indian idea four in Bauddha, Jaina, Sāṅkhya and other schools, that our gro body is the result of subtle tendencies (saṁskāras) and th evolution takes place, here, from the subtler to the grosse Among Western thinkers, Bergson also holds a similar view The organism is for him the product of the subtle vital urg Both these kinds of views agree to reject the ordinary idea the formation of the body by the mere mechanical aggregatio of the visible parts. There is, of course, the difference be ween the general Indian and the general Western theory o an important point, namely, that whereas the former woul trace the force that initiates the formation of the body to th past life of the individual, the latter would trace it to th individual's ancestors.

Though any elaborate discussion of this subject is no possible here, it may be mentioned briefly that the two views ar not irreconcilable. In fact, the Western view, based on th observation of the obvious relation and similarity betwee the child and its ancestors, is not foreign to the India mind. The Sanskrit word for child, santāna, means con tinuity (of ancestral line). There are so many statements again, in the different scriptures, the Vedas, the Brāhmaṇas etc., to the effect that the husband is reborn as the child through the wife, the self is born as son, etc. If the Indian philosopher's hypothesis of pre-existence of the individual in another body is otherwise found acceptable, it is quite possible to think that the present body is the result of the union of two streams, individual and parental, this union being made possible by the individual and parents' inherent inclinations (saṁskāras or karmas) coinciding. To clarify this point with one of the many possible examples of the coincidence of multi- ple lines of inclinations : A university by its own conscious and unconscious traditions and policies, attracts teachers and

students, each one of whom pursues his conscious and unconscious inclinations, and the three sides meet and co-operate, yet the object of each party is fulfilled.

Those Indian thinkers, like Naiyāyikas and other theists, who think that it is not possible for blind tendencies born of the individual's previous action to seek out the family, environment, etc., birth into which would exactly suit them, take recourse to God for bringing about such coincidence. They find it easier to reconcile the law of heredity and the law of 'karma', and their task is, in some respects, similar to that of the Western theists who would like to believe both in the natural law of evolution and the divine creation of man.

But to come back to the main point, after this incidental digression, our body, as it is outwardly seen, is the visible expression of an inner force which works in a definite direction and realizes a series of ends through a series of well-adjusted means. It is true that we find different propensities and inclinations in the body, e.g., towards eating, excreting, moving, resting, waking, sleeping, speaking, laughing, sneezing, coughing, and so on. Some of these also appear to be antagonistic. Yet all of these form on the whole such a balance and harmony and combine to make the body such a unit having a regular direction of growth, development and decay that we may regard the apparently different forces as the expressions of the same basic force along different complementary paths. This is like our regarding apparently different currents between two banks making for one course and towards one destination, as one river. Or, to come nearer home, the forces found in the body are one, just as the visible body is almost universally regarded as one in spite of its possessing many cells as well as different visible parts, in some of which there may even be malignant growth, like cancer, feeding upon the other members.

To cut short the discussion, the problem whether the bodily force is one or many is like the question whether the ultimate reality is one or many. Neither of them can be answered unless it is first settled what kind or degree of unity would make a thing one. For we call a heap of stones one, a building made of those stones one, a tree with many branches, roots, etc., one,

the mind one, and so on; but surely we do not find the same degree of unity in all of them. The different tendencies expressed in the formation of the body and in its outward behaviour are so inseparably co-ordinated and so harmoniously serve common purposes that the unity of the body has been regarded as the very ideal of unity, and called *organic unity.* These tendencies can thus be said to be the functions of one force.

II

The Body as our Link with the World

Another interesting line of speculation about the body is its relation to the world. Apparently, the body is clearly bounded off by the skin from the rest of the world. But a moment's reflection shows that its existence is inseparably one with the outer world. It is common knowledge that the cells, the ultimate living material units of the body, complete their individual cycle of growth and decay much sooner than the body as a whole, so that within a few years the old set of cells gradually gives place to a completely new set. The body is entirely renewed, the cells are all formed out of the external world—from the light, air, water and food which are supplied by the latter. The body is thus made out of the stuff of the world and is dependent on it.

It is also evident from this—what we saw in the previous section—that the matter which apparently passes for the body is not an abiding factor, still less the basic factor. It is a mere aggregation of the cells which have been formed by the selective life-force out of the world, and are also given back to the world to make room for newly-formed cells. The body thus appears to be a changing tool selectively created by the life-force out of the world, and does not really wall us off from it.

We must admit, then, that the position of the body in the world is like that of an eddy in a river. The eddy appears to have a contour and configuration of its own and thus to be separate from the river, but in fact it is being constantly fed out of and emptied into the river, and has no basically distinct existence of its own. In other words, the energy underlying

the body is an integral part of that which underlies the matter that appears to constitute the world. The body is not a closed system, but really continuous with the world. The conclusion is supported by the modern physical conception of matter as electrical energy and the world as a field of intimately interrelated waves of energy.

The view is further strengthened when we consider the sensory-motor structure of the body. The sensory system is tuned to the external stimuli and receives constantly the inflowing energy from the outer world, but only to turn it back to the world through its diverse motor paths, completing thus a cycle of influx and efflux of energy.

Looking again to the digesting and assimilating functions of the body, we find, further, that the dead food that is received by the body from the outer world is converted, by the metabolic process, into its living parts. We find here that the body not only overcomes the boundary between the inner and the outer, but also between life and death. It disproves the absoluteness of the distinction between inorganic and organic by converting the former into the latter. But by the death of the body cells, and also of the body as a whole, the same truth is proved by the reverse process, by the reduction of the living into the dead.

The interchangeability of the inner and the outer, and the dead and the living, observable in the bodily phenomena, removes thus the misconception of our isolated existence. The body is sometimes described as the prison-house, because it is mistaken to be a bounded and isolated lump of flesh and bone. But when we see it in its proper perspective we are able to dispel this wrong idea; it is found to be a living link with the world around us, more a liberator than a fetter.

III

The Body as the Measure

But while it is the body which links us up with the world, every body does it in its own way. Each body, composed as it is, serves as the peculiar measure of knowledge, action, enjoyment and valuation.

Our knowledge of the world depends on the number and nature of the sense organs. An animal's body, as the Jainas point out, may have only one sense (tactual), or two senses (tactual and gustatory), or three senses (tactual, gustatory and olfactory), or four senses (tactual, gustatory, olfactory and visual), or five senses (tactual, gustatory, olfactory, visual and auditory). Necessarily, therefore, knowledge through each kind of body would be limited by the number of the senses; and the knowledge of each animal would be substantially different. Even human beings differ in the constitution of their sense organs, in spite of their normally having the five senses. Totally or partially colour-blind persons, for example, have different kinds of eyes than the normal people, and their knowledge of the world is consequently different from that of the latter. If we had developed one more sense, our notion of the world could have been much different from the present, as the example of evolution of the eyes would show. The eyes were acquired by animals very late in the course of evolution; yet an animal having eyes, such as the human being, is led by visual knowledge. Vision presents the world as consisting of things with clear-cut boundaries, separate from the body and other objects. Depending mostly on this, we believe that the world is an aggregate of discrete and separate objects. We are thus led, in our conception of the world, by the senses we possess. They are the measure of our knowledge of the world.

The body is also the measure and regulator of our actions. We can create changes in the outer world through the body, but usually only through a few organs which Indian philosophers have enumerated as five, the organs of speech, prehension, locomotion, excretion and reproduction. Our action is thus limited by the number, nature and capacity of the motor organs.

Our enjoyment of the world arises mostly out of our knowledge and action. *It is, therefore, indirectly dependent on the* senses and motor organs. The body has, therefore, been described in Indian systems as the organ and abode of enjoyment (bhogāyatana).

Valuation is closely related to enjoyment. While the crow values dirt, and the vulture values carrion, man abhors them;

and what one man with a strong power of digestion values, another fears and avoids like poison. What is harmonious with the senses, nerves and the general state of the body is nice and beautiful. It would be found thus that our valuation also largely depends on the organs and the general constitution of the body. The body is, therefore, the measure of values as well.

Speaking of the body's part in action, enjoyment and valuation, we should particularly mention the part played by the glandular system which determines the general tone, activity and attitude of the individual and determines, in a word, his personality. A little change in the secretion of the glands may change a dull man into an active one, a gloomy person into a cheerful one, and effect a phenomenal change in his action, enjoyment and appreciation of values.

On the whole, then, the body is found to measure out for the individual his share of the opportunities that the world offers for knowledge, activity and enjoyment. But, as we have seen in a previous section, the body itself is a tool created by a force with definite direction and tendencies. The different organs—senses, nerves, muscles, glands and the rest—are the products of this vital force. They grow and work as a team to fulfil the cravings of the creating force. The five senses of men, comparative biology would tell us, develop out of the primitive epithelial cell—the cell of which our skin is made—by gradual differentiation. The old Naiyāyikas of India regarded also the skin (tvak) as the basic sense necessary for sense perception in general. The Sāṅkhya and the Vedānta regard all the organs (indriyas) of knowledge and action, including the internal ones, as products of gradual differentiation of the same urge for enjoyment (bhoga-vāsanā).

IV

Knowledge of the Body

Our knowledge of the body is primarily derived from vision, which reveals it as a circumscribed figure having a position in the extended visual space. It is seen as being outside of, and excluded by, other objects, even by the ground on which it

rests. This visual knowledge of the body, as well as of other objects, is responsible for our thinking that we are confined to a limited portion of the world and that the world consists of mutually exclusive material objects.

Fortunately, however, there is another way of knowing the body. We can understand the matter with an example given by Bergson; we can see our arm move successively through different positions and we can also feel the movement from within (even if we close our eyes). In the first case each position of the arm is found outside another, just as each instant of time corresponding to the different positions is thought to be external to another. But in the second case the movement is not presented in the form of an extended series, but as a continuous act.

What is true of an arm, is true of the body as a whole. We can feel the existence of the body even without the outer senses by closing, for example, our eyes. The body is reduced thereby to a mass of intermingling and interpenetrating experiences of diverse kinds which do not appear outside one another, provided we also succeed in the difficult task of keeping out the visual image of the body, in accordance with which all experiences are mentally sorted out, even on the closing of the eyes, and allotted to different portions of space outside one another. If we can successfully exclude the visual image of the body and the external world, then our bodily feelings mingle also with the tactual, olfactory and auditory sensations of the outer world. The body is not experienced as having an isolated existence outside other objects Our continuity with and inseparability from the world are also in this way deeply impressed on us.

By comparing and contrasting the inner and outer notions of the body—the body as felt and the body as seen—we realize a very interesting and instructive fact. That which is felt from within as a mass of intermingling experiences is seen from without as an extended body occupying space, and having its parts outside one another. This helps us to understand how the unextended and the extended, the mind and the body, may quite be the two aspects of one fundamental reality. Mere closing of the eyes, suppression of the visual

image, dissolves the solid, extended body to a fluid mass of feelings, which again can be projected out in space by simply opening our eyes.

One's knowledge of one's own body is, however, very poor. With our eyes we can see only the outer surface of the body, but not even the whole of it. Our internal knowledge of the body is still poorer. We are so much occupied with the outer view, and base so much of our life on it, that the inner view comes only as an occasional intrusion, particularly when there is something wrong with the body and there is some feeling of pain, stress or strain. Our chief internal feeling arises from the movement of any part of the body, or the body as a whole. This is our experience of the body in action. Kinaesthetic feeling is, therefore, sometimes used almost as synonymous with somatic feeling. But we have also other bodily feelings like general well-being and its opposite, depression, and also exhilaration, alertness, buoyancy, heaviness, dullness, exhaustion, etc. We also feel certain tendencies towards action and enjoyment, as would be evident from English expressions like, "I don't (or do) *feel like* eating, drinking, playing," etc.

Repeated practice or addiction creates some habits of the body which tend towards the repetition of those actions. If these tendencies do not get the necessary outlet at the habitual hour, the body has a peculiar feeling of missing the desired thing—food, drink, narcotic, beverage, exercise, etc. Some of these feelings become so strong that they cease to be simply negative and become positively painful. Such, for example, are the feelings of hunger, thirst and many other wants which are expressed by the English phrases, "hunger for", "thirst after", "itch for".

It may also be noted that when we use our sense organs for the knowledge of external objects, the sense experience that we have contains not only the knowledge of the object, but also of the condition of the sense in action. We can notice this particularly when there is some maladjustment either within the different parts of the organ as a result of disease (e.g., opacity of the lenses of the eyes, thickening of the ear-drums) or between the organ and the object (e.g., too

strong light, too hot object). For, in such cases, there is a positive painful feeling in the organ of knowledge. It is reasonable to judge from this that the ease, pleasure or comfort felt in different sense perceptions contains as its component the feeling arising from the senses as well, being either the result of their internal health or their harmonious relations with the objects.

The body is, again, the barometer of emotion, particularly, the violent ones which warm, chill, shake and strain the body. We can feel these conditions of the body directly. By successful control and pacification of anger, jealousy, ill-will, greed, etc., not only the mind, but also the body can be put at ease. So "bodily ease" is described by Buddha as one of the results of deeper concentration (jhāna or dhyāna) attained after the overcoming of all passions.

In spite of these various feelings by which we can know our body from within, our knowledge is very limited. There are many parts of the body about which we do not have any explicit and distinct feeling, though we may reasonably suppose that the feelings arising from each part of the body mingle together to make the general bodily tone of a particular moment. But with voluntary concentration of attention we can raise into full and distinct consciousness the feelings about many parts which are otherwise generally outside the focus of consciousness. We can then fix attention, for example, on the neglected little toe of the right leg, or the scalp of the head or the navel. In the Yoga, and more particularly in the Tantra (or Śākta) philosophy of India, practice of attention on different parts of the body is recommended for the attainment of concentration and even for supernormal powers. It is claimed about concentration in general that if it can be fully developed, it is possible to know all about the object concentrated upon, be it a part of our body or anything outside. But even in the light of normal experience, we can understand at least so far that by concentration we can bring into the clear focus of consciousness what was dimly felt before. But the best way of feeling clearly the existence and condition of a member of the body is to move it if we can and throw it into action.

V

Control of the Body

Generally, we think that the body is ours and we can do with it what we will. This idea is caused by our ability to move the major limbs and with them the entire body from one place to another. But a little thought shows that our control—that is, the mastery of our will—over the body is as meagre as our knowledge of it. The most vital organs on which the existence of the body depends—the heart, the lungs, the liver, the kidneys, the stomach and the intestines—function without our conscious guidance. So also does a major part of the nervous system.

Even in the cases of voluntary movement our control is only partial. When my leg moves as the result of my desire to walk, or my tongue moves as a result of my desire to speak, I am unconscious of the processes—the activity of the cerebral centres, of the different motor nerves and of the muscles—which must take place between my desiring and the overt act. The self-conscious dweller of the house knows little of its internal mechanism, which maintains and repairs itself mostly without his guidance. He has simply to put on the switch of desire and many things are done for him; but he does not know how.

This is the description of what happens in normal health. But there are times, fortunately rare, when paralysis of the limbs happens and the unhappy dweller, once proud of being the owner, helplessly looks on the body as a mere spectator. His desire to use it and move it remains altogether uncomplied.

But this story of the diminution of control must be counterbalanced by that of the opposite fact, the possibility of its increase. By repeated practice and exercise, control is gained on parts which are normally beyond control. The feats of muscle-dancing, moving the ears, etc., by some physical-culturists and others, the control of breath even by ordinary persons, the control of automatic nervous system claimed by the yogins, and similar things show that we can increase our conscious control over the body to a large extent, though we may not fully control the body as some yogins claim to be

able to do. The influence of hypnotic suggestion in the control of certain future behaviour of the subject, as also of auto-suggestion in respect of one's own life, are facts which would seem also to suggest that the conscious will can, by some intense effort, sink into the unconscious level of life so as to work in a desired but unperceived way.

IV

The Body, The Ego and The Soul

Other persons locate me where my body is seen, and I do the same about them. Each one of us is thus confined mutually to a portion of space occupied by the body. An outsider sees almost the entire outline of my body; in any case he sees much more of it than I can. He can also observe more about my overt acts, how I stand, walk, speak, laugh and use my limbs. He has, therefore, a greater external knowledge of my body and distinguishes me from others by these seen peculiarities.

Though I am at a disadvantage in this respect, the partial outer knowledge I have of the body is amply supplemented by two other things, which my neighbour lacks about me, and by which I am so intimately wedded to the body. First, I have the inner knowledge of the body by the many bodily feelings, previously mentioned, which others lack about me. Secondly, I can normally move and use my body in a way others cannot. I have thus a sense of peculiar identification with the body. I own it and caress it—even if it be the ugliest, the most diseased, disfigured and painful body in the world. The body's interest and cravings, pleasures and pains, friends and enemies are all mine. The body is my first love. I can attend to and think of others only when the minimum of attention required for the body has been paid. My love for others is an outflow of surplus energy—that which can be spared by the body after its vital needs are satisfied. This is realized when the body faces a crisis and I become altogether listless, and lose interest in the surrounding things and people, that used to be the dearest in normal health. It is natural, therefore, that I should think as though I am nothing but the body,

and that some philosophers (like the Chārvākas, the materialists) also should identify me completely with the body.

But this view cannot be accepted as final. The main difficulties that create doubt about this identity are what we discussed already, that we possess neither full knowledge of, nor full control over, the body. How can I say that I am the body if I do not even know what I consist of, or if I am only a helpless spectator of some parts of the body which I cannot move or control ? It would seem from this that "I" am not the whole of the body; it may be that I am identical with a part of the body. But even this qualified conclusion is opposed by the fact that whereas I often feel and, therefore, say that this body is mine, I never feel that I belong to the body as I should if I were a part of it, As between the body and I, owning or possessing is the exclusive predicate of the "I", not of the body. I own as mine many things, persons and places even outside the body. It is not reasonable, therefore, that I should be considered identical with a part or whole of the body.

Yet I cannot so easily brush aside the usual and normal feeling and behaviour as though I were identical with the body. The uncertain variable relation between the body and me calls for a revision of the ordinary ideas about both these terms of the relation.

We should observe and realize that just as the body, on closer view, is found to be not really a closed system but continuous with the universe, I also am not confined to any fixed boundary. I can change or increase the range of my identification to an incredible extent. Within the body itself, those parts which are generally beyond my knowledge and control are also capable of *being known and controlled*, and I can consciously own them as my own. Even now, if a pin is run through any such usually unknown or uncontrolled member of the body, say the appendix (which is sometimes regarded as superfluous), I would scream in pain and feel and complain that I have been seriously hurt. There can be no more tangible proof than this to show that even such an unclaimed member is mine. But the range of my affection can be extended even beyond the body to the members of the family, the society, the country, the world of living beings and even

inanimate objects like dress, furniture, house and property. With any of these I do or can identify myself. If my child or wife or property or country is injured or threatened, I feel hurt or worried and complain often as bitterly as when my body is affected.

These facts point to the conclusion that though the feeling of the ego is at first associated with the body as its basis, it gradually spreads through the lines that link the body to the world and to those contents of the world with which the interest of the body is directly or indirectly connected. So we can understand how I can exclusively own the body and yet go far beyond it. As the body is limited to superficial view, so am I. But as the body is really one with the universe, so am I too. The first is the view of the man in the street. The second would be the view of those who care to look deeper and wider into facts.

But if we were to say only this, there would be a serious misconception that the body is the ultimate basis of the ego. We would then be ignoring what we learnt previously, namely, that the body itself is a tool, a means created by a deeper force, and it also changes with the needs of its creator—grows, develops, multiplies, and withers away. It would be more accurate, then, to suppose that the ego-consciousness is also the product of that ultimate force which organizes the body, refreshes it from moment to moment and retracts it too when death of the particular organism is needed for the continuation of its progress through new lines and centres.

That I am not absolutely tied to this body's interest, but can overgrow it to serve the wider interest of that of which the body is created a tool, is amply proved by the rare, but the most memorable facts of human history—the voluntary sacrifice of the body by martyrs who command the highest admiration of their fellow-beings. Such examples show that the self can sacrifice the body to obey the urge of some more basic principle to which the body also is subservient.

If consciousness be the name of the higher processes of thinking, feeling and willing which we find in man, we have to say that the basic force works *unconsciously* through the body. For the body, as we saw, grows and maintains itself automati-

cally without thought or conscious plan. But if sensitivity, selective reaction and purposeful activity be the signs of consciousness, then every part of the body can be said to be conscious and so also the force working in the body. So long as higher consciousness is not necessary, vital force acts without it, carrying on its activities automatically. But when such a method fails, it evolves the higher one of reflection and thoughtful planning. The feeling of "I" evolves only then. It is the self-reference of the basic force by reflection (or turning back) on itself. It owns the body as the expression of itself. So the "I" is nothing but that self-conscious force. I can, therefore, say: "This body is mine" and not "I am the body's."

In a previous section we explained how the different tendencies which are manifested in the same body may be regarded as one force because of forming one integrated system. But as this force underlying a particular body is inseparable from the energy system underlying the world, all animal bodies and inanimate objects are inseparably interconnected. Each eddy is created by a few currents which belong to the system of currents that compose one river. But even the apparently different systems of currents, that is, even different rivers, flowing east, west, north and south, are ultimately intelligible as the diverse manifestations of the one basic force of gravitation—the attraction of the water by mother earth towards her bosom.

So long as I am identified with the particular body in its ordinary limited aspect, and opposed to others, I function as the ego. But I, in my wider aspect, am above such narrow limitation and identical with the basic force underlying my body and continuous with the world outside. In this aspect I may be called the soul, that is, the underlying reality of the body as well as the world apparently outside of, but really one with, the body.

The consciousness of the life force as the "I" is needed for the protection and welfare of the body. The ego-consciousness fulfils a biological need and is not to be deprecated. But if the ego is not enlightened and fails to realize that even the interest of the body cannot be served well without understanding its organic relation with the rest of the world, and without

harmonizing the body with nature and its interest with the interest of society, it leads the body to conflict, misery and ruin. There is, therefore, a biological urge behind the body-minded ego to widen its outlook. A life of ideal harmony demands that I should realize, through the connection and conformity with its best interests, the inseparable connection and continuity of the body with the rest of the world, and develop thus the sense of my identity and harmony with the universe. This would create in me the feeling of wholeness—the feeling of missing nothing—without which perfect health is unattainable.

Conclusion

The philosophy of the body that we can formulate by gathering the ideas of the different sections of this paper can be summed up now. The body is not a self-enclosed, isolated and static mass of matter walling off the individual from the universe. But, on the contrary, it is an ever-changing product of creative energy underlying the world out of which it is constantly made and into which it is constantly emptied, so that it is inseparable from the world, as an eddy is from a river. To contemplate this truth is to realize that the body is not a prison house but a living link of the individual with the universe. The inner view of the body, again, makes us feel that the body, as a mass of experiences, intermingles with those about the world and is inseparable from the latter. The body is thus felt to be not outside of other objects, but to be inextricably mingled with them.

The body cannot, moreover, be regarded as an accidental product. It is a tool of the basic force which evolves it, changes it, remakes it, multiplies it and ultimately withdraws it, all by a long and complex chain of wonderfully adjusted means and ends.

The body, properly considered, demonstrates the interchangeability of life and death—organic and inorganic matter—and shows further that matter and mind, the extended and the non-extended, are but two phases of the same reality.

The ego which claims to own the body, knows little of it, and has little control over it, though such knowledge and

control can be indefinitely increased. The consciousness of the ego which emerges through the body is at first a protective mechanism of the basic life force in the interest of the body. It fails in its purpose if it does not realize the unity of the body, through the basic force, with the world outside.

The feeling that the body is integral to the universe, creates a sense of wholeness that can help the body to attain perfect health. It also generates the confidence that if we can learn the art of tapping, training and controlling the energy underlying this finite centre, we can increasingly draw upon the infinite energy which underlies the universe and which is continuous with the bodily energy. If by special effort of the will we can own, control and move parts of the body previously unclaimed and uncontrolled, there is no obstacle to the speculation that by a similar but more intensified and protracted effort it might be possible to control things in the world, ordinarily supposed to be outside of my body, but with which I am really one and with which I can identify myself, by overcoming the false notion of my isolation and limitation.

The body, which is continuous with the universe and is a centre through which the universal energy acts and manifests itself, may be utilized as a lever to change the universe by a proper training of thought and will.

Again, the fact that the body is formed, changed and entirely rebuilt by the change of cells, several times after birth, and multiplied in other centres (the offspring) and finally allowed to disintegrate, points to the probability that the life-force behind this purposeful series of processes can similarly form a new body after death to satisfy fresh inclinations, if there be any.

These are some of the ideas that we can gather from the different vistas of speculation that the thought about the body in its diverse aspects opens to us. We have purposely confined ourselves to the body and refrained from linking up our thoughts with the metaphysics of the soul or the universe as a whole. The almost universal depreciation of body-consciousness (dehātmabuddhi) in Indian philosophy has created the wrong tendency to underrate the importance of the body. One of the purposes of this paper is to dispel this wrong idea. The

body is the basis of our existence here as the Upaniṣads correctly recognized, and the first step in the philosophy of man is a proper understanding of its true nature—not only its limitations, but also its infinite potentialities.

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The Windowless Monads

In the gradual development of European philosophy from Descartes to Kant, Leibniz presents an abrupt change that baffles the teacher and the student alike, and calls for a rapid re-adjustment of focus. At the back of this philosopher's explicit but brief confession of faith there lies a versatile mind which has absorbed the valuable elements of thought from many great thinkers, from the Greeks to the moderns; and the student with his limited background of the immediately preceding thoughts, fails to understand Leibniz's views unless the teacher succeeds in sliding the glass for him back and forth upon the vast tract of thoughts along which the philosopher journeyed to his goal. But even if one succeeds in tracing the different elements of the philosopher's thought historically to their sources or analogues, there remains the still more difficult task of understanding the logical coherence of the many apparently conflicting elements. One of the most fundamental and yet baffling points of Leibniz's philosophy is the windowlessness of the monads. Born of his free intellectual analysis, this theory militates against the theories of God and creation which he adopted from traditional faith and philosophy. We shall discuss here the rational grounds of his theory of windowlessness and some of the major difficulties which it raises in understanding the other parts of his philosophy.

The grounds on which Leibniz held the view that the "monads have no windows through which anything could come in or go out"[1] can be brought under three chief heads. First, the monads are *substances*; therefore, their accident "cannot separate themselves from substances, nor go about outside of them"[2], and thus "neither substance nor accident can come into a monad from outside".[3] Secondly, a monad is *simple*, and, therefore, it has no parts and "there is no way of explaining how a monad can be altered in quality or internally changed by any other created thing, since it is impossible

1. *Monadology*, 7. Tr. by Robert Latta in his *Leibniz*, p. 219.
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Ibid*

to change the place of anything in it or to conceive in it any internal motion which could be produced, directed, increased or diminished therein, although all this is possible in the case of compounds, in which there are changes among the parts".[4] Thirdly, a monad is a *spiritual mirror of the whole universe*,[5] and it has "no outside"[6], and, therefore, 'coming from outside' or 'passing outside from it' is inconceivable.

These three arguments for windowlessness are nothing but the *a priori* analyses of the three fundamental constituents of the conception of a monad as a *simple spiritual* (representative) *substance*, and though they can be exhibited separately they are rooted in the same *concept*. Let us consider the difficulties that arise from this conception of a monad as a windowless substance and see how far they can be set aside. The very first question that is asked by a student of the history of philosophy after learning the windowless nature of a monad is: How can Leibniz speak of the *creation* of such a monad? Is not a 'created monad' a contradiction in terms?

This difficulty is made plausible by the following considerations—(a) A monad is described by Leibniz as a substance which is self-active, all the predicates or attributes of which are contained within it. How can such an entity be conceived also to be dependent on any other reality like God? (b) Again, a monad is said to be simple. How can God be conceived as influencing such a partless entity? Creative activity either creates some change within the monad or does not. In the first case, how can such a change be possible in a partless substance? To say that though no natural agent can produce such a change, a supernatural agent like God can do so, is to dodge reason by resorting to obscurity. If partlessness be the reason why monads "neither come into being nor come to an end by natural means,"[7] it is the very reason which stands also in the way of their being made or unmade by God. In the second case, that is, if creative activity produces no change in a monad, such activity

4. *Ibid.*
5. *Cf. Discourse on Metaphysics*, XXXVI.
6. Wildon Carr, *The Monadology of Leibniz*, p. 40.
7. *Principles of Nature and Grace*, 2. *Cf. Monadology*, 6 and 7.

is useless and inconceivable.

There are various possible ways of setting aside the first consideration which raises the difficulty. The most obvious one is, following Descartes, to admit a distinction between a relative substance and an absolute one, and confess that God alone is absolutely independent and a created monad is relatively so, being independent of all other created monads, but absolutely dependent on God. Though this defence has the support of Leibniz's own statements,[8] it is in conflict with his fundamental notion of a substance as being the source of all its predicates and activities, and it exposes the pluralistic philosophy of Leibniz to an incipient monism. A better attempt at defence, one that is more in keeping with pluralism, is to point out that in essence a monad is eternal[9], it is only the existence of the monad which depends on God. In other words, as a possibility a monad is eternally real; God simply confers actuality on it. Creation, according to this view, is nothing more than a selection and grouping of what are already real as essences, or making the possible compossible. When the further question is raised as to whether the possibility of a monad does not imply its conceivability by God and whether, therefore, the reality of a monad as a possibility is not dependent on God's intellect, the reply is that though a monad may be thus dependent on God's intellect, yet it is not dependent on God's will or activity and, therefore, it is as such not created by God, but prior to the creative activity.[10]

This defence saves the situation to a great extent by reconciling the createdness of a monad with its uncreated essence. A monad remains a substance in the full sense of the term in so far as its essence is concerned. But there remains still the difficulty of understanding the exact nature of the existence or actuality of a monad and its relation to the monad. Is existence a predicate of the monad ? Is it in the monad also in essence ? If existence is already there in the essence of a monad, then there is nothing that is conferred by God on the monad; and if existence is not contained in its essence, the

8. *Cf. Monadology*, 43; *New System*, 13 and 14; Russell's *Philosophy of Leibniz*, p 187.
9. *Cf. Monadology*, 43 and Robert Latta's *Leibniz*, p. 241, note 67.
10 *Cf. ibid.*

monad acquires some extrinsic attribute and, therefore, ceases to be a windowless substance. Leibniz tries to avoid these difficulties, it seems, by holding that existence also is contained in the essence of a monad, in so far as a monad can be said to contain the tendency to exist or the possibility of existence.[11] God, therefore, does not add anything to the monad other than what was already potentially contained in it. God's creation only actualizes the potential. Thus creation and windowlessness of a monad are not incompatible. On the contrary, the possibility of creation being also potentially contained in the monad, whose fitness alone is the ground of divine choice, creation is but the logical sequence of the monad's inherent nature or tendency to exist.

In order to understand the real significance of this solution, it is necessary to understand clearly the meaning of existence in the light of Leibniz's general philosophical outlook. Existence cannot mean, in the case of a monad, occupation of a position in space; for a monad is non-extended and, moreover, space is a mental construction which is itself in a monad. Existence, furthermore, cannot mean occupation of an actual moment of time, as it means in the philosophy of Kant; for time also is an ideal construction and is, therefore, in the monad. What is meant then by saying that God actualizes the *potentiality of a monad by making it exist?* The only reasonable meaning seems to be that God correlates and forms a group out of the monads he chooses for making the universe. Existence means thus 'belonging to the group of the chosen monads'. In passing from a 'possible' to an 'existent', the only new factor that is required is the exercise of this divine choice. No internal change, therefore, disturbs the windowless monad which is created and made existent.

The difficulty arising out of the inconsistency between the simplicity of a monad and the creation of it may also be set aside in view of this solution. If existence implies nothing more than the fact or the effect of being chosen by God, then there is no difficulty in thinking of the choice or existence of

11. *Ibid. Cf.* also "....that it is not only immortal, and, so to speak, permanent, but that it bears in its substance traces of everything that happens to it." (Correspondence with Arnauld, quoted from Montgomery's *Leibniz*, p. 118.)

a simple, partless reality, the choice involving no change of parts. Further, the reason why natural production is not possible becomes also obvious, because such production involves change of parts, and the reason why supernatural or divine creation is possible is that it does not involve such a change—it means only the choosing of the simple which is already real.

But even when all difficulties threatening the independence, permanence and self-activity of a monad are removed by thinking that 'everything that happens' to the monad, including even its compossibility and its being chosen by God, is already contained in the eternal essence of the monad, there remains one final difficulty which does not cease to puzzle Leibniz's reader. Is there any difference between the potential and the actual ? If there is any difference between the two, then it is futile to urge that all that is in the actual is already there in the potential. If, however, there is no difference at all, then the creative act of God will be pointless and false. On the one hand, Leibniz adheres strongly to the theory that the effect is entirely contained in the cause, being confirmed in this belief as much by his studies of Greek philosophy[12] as by the biological investigation of his time.[13] On the other hand, he clings fast to the Christian idea of creation as a real fact. But he scarcely realises the inconsistency between the two. If he followed out the first belief with logical rigidity, he might have found himself in the position of the Eleatics or the Vedantin and declared change or creation to be an illusion. If, again, he consistently followed out the consequences of the reality of creation, he would have qualified the belief that 'everything that happens' to a substance is already contained in it. But as it is, the two incompatible tendencies dominate his philosophy and remain unreconciled.

We have thus far considered the question of the incompatibility between the windowless character of monads and the creation of monads only from the point of view of the windowlessness of the created monads. But if God also is a monad and, therefore, windowless, the above difficulty arises also from the other side. How can a windowless monad like

12. *Cf. Discourse on Metaphysics*, XXVI.
13. *Cf. Monadology*, 74.

God influence the other monads?

There are some interpreters[14] of Leibniz who contend that Leibniz did not really consider God a monad. According to them, the phrase 'the monad of monads' as an epithet of God is not really used by Leibniz, though it is erroneously attributed to him, and the few passages where God is spoken of as a monad by Leibniz are but 'slips'.[15] Apart from textual interpretation, this view, if true, removes at least two great difficulties. The first difficulty removed is the one that arises from the law of continuity. If the law of continuity is universally applicable to all monads, there must be in God, the highest member of the series of monads, some amount of passivity, however small, just as there is some amount of activity also in the dullest monad, the lowest member of the series. But God is described by Leibniz as *purely* active, contrary to this deduction from the law of continuity. If God is not a monad, then He is beyond this law and there is no inconsistency. The second difficulty that is avoided seems to be the one we have been discussing here. If God is not a monad at all, then the question how God can act upon the monads does not seem to arise.

But all may not accept the view that God has been described as a monad only by a slip of the pen. Some may think that if God is not a monad then the concept of '*created* monad' so frequently used would become partially futile, in so far as every monad would then be 'created'. These sceptical minds may continue to be puzzled, therefore, by the question of the action of God on the other monads.

Besides, they may even go to the extent of pointing out that the problem does not cease even if God is not called a monad. For, the reasons why monads are regarded as windowless, namely their being substances, being simple and being spiritual (representing *all* objects), are all present in God. God is a substance in an unqualified sense and, therefore, it can be said that His "accidents cannot separate themselves" from Him, "nor go about outside of" Him. God, being incorporeal and partless, must be simple also and, therefore, no

14. *E.g.*, Bertrand Russell, *vide* his *Philosophy of Leibniz*, pp. 187 ff.
15. *Cf. ibid.*

part of God can be said to go out. Being the Perfect Spirit, God has an all-inclusive view of the entire universe and, therefore, there is no 'outside to' Him. God has, therefore, all the characteristics attaching to that which is windowless. How can He be conceived as capable of influencing other monads ?

If God is windowless and the created monads are not included within God, then creation, even as choosing and grouping, appears to be impossible. For, before choosing the monads, God must be able to know them. But being windowless, God cannot perceive what is beyond Himself. God cannot be said to have a knowledge of monads outside Him, through the law of pre-established harmony, for this law itself is a creation of God, and it is impossible for God to make it without a previous knowledge of the monads. Leibniz's theory of creation thus becomes unintelligible.

If, however, the created monads are all included within God, just as our thoughts are within our mind,[16] creation is possible; but the question then arises: How far does the independence of the created monads remain unaffected ? The monads, it may be replied, can even then be regarded as having some fixed unalterable essential nature which does not depend on the will of God. We can think of a circle or ellipse only because it is conceivable, its essential nature is a possibility. But we fail to think of a square circle because its unalterably stubborn nature does not obey the laws of thought. The circle which my mind thinks can, therefore, be said to have a nature, an essence, which allows my mind to think of it and which, therefore, has a nature independent of my will. I may choose for my *thought, say, a group of three objects*, namely, a circle inscribed in a triangle which is inscribed in an ellipse. Though in making this combination I exercise my will, my will can work only in so far as the essence of each of the three objects is itself such that it is possible to be thought, and allows the particular combination. Similarly, each monad can be conceived as having its essential independent nature which makes God's thought and choice possible.

It is possible thus to avoid the difficulty of God's acting

16. *Cf.* : "For the understanding of God is the region of eternal truths or of the ideas on which they depend." (*Monadology*, 43).

on the monads by conceiving the monads to be concepts in the divine mind and at the same time conceiving them as having, in a way, independent, unalterable natures as essences or possibilities, *which are not created by God.*[17]

This defence can, if necessary, be fortified by quotations from Leibniz's works, where the different monads are described as the different 'views' of God and said to be unfolding in the histories of their lives only what are contained in their concepts.[18] *But a question of vital importance arises here.* God is conceived as pure activity. If the concept of the monad has an unalterable, independent nature which makes God perceive it as it is, does it not mean that God's intellect here passively knows the essence of a monad which is already real? *In other words, if the independence of a monad be saved by* holding that its essence is eternally real, dependence of God on this essence in the matter of perceiving it must necessarily follow and to that extent God becomes a passive percipient. God can then no longer be conceived to be purely active.

If, however, God's conception is to remain intact, we have to conceive the monads as the free creations or factitious ideas of God produced solely by his perception. It may be mentioned also that the distinction between intellect and will previously mentioned as an explanation of the independence of a monad, acquires a new significance if God is thought of as purely active. The intellect of God being absolutely free in its activity, perception of an object amounts to the active creation of an object, *and not merely its passive reception.*[19]

But this conclusion, if rightly drawn, only means that a monad is created in essence by God as soon as it is perceived or thought of. It acquires existence as soon as this thought is combined with that of other monads that constitute, along with it, the system of the world. A monad, then, becomes *wholly* dependent on God and ceases to deserve the name. *Only after its production* by the free activity of God may it be

17. *Cf.* : "He does not create them as essences. They are the objects of His understanding, and 'He is not the author of His own understanding'." (Robert Latta, *Leibniz*, p. 241, note 67.)

18. *Cf. Discourse on Metaphysics*, XIV.

19. *Cf.* Descartes's contention that "in God willing and knowing are one". (Quoted by Robert Latta in his *Leibniz*, p. 242, note 72.)

said to be free, in so far as it will *then* simply unfold from within *itself* all that has been thought into it by God at the time of its creation, and it can *then* act for ever spontaneously. But this conclusion reduces the pluralism of Leibniz to a type of monism and pantheism.

But leaving aside even the question of creation, the windowlessness of a monad creates also many difficulties of epistemology. To mention only the chief and the most fundamental among them, how is the philosophy of Leibniz at all possible if his mind is a windowless monad ? If his mind is windowless, there is no opening left by which any information regarding any other reality can penetrate into it. If all the phenomena that appear before the mind well up from within the mind, what is the necessity of believing at all in any other mind ? We do not find any attempt in the philosopher to prove how, starting from the self-enclosed world of his own ideas, he can reach out to the other created monads and God. If a philosopher starts with his ideas, he may come to believe in external realities, if he discovers, like Descartes or Kant, that some of the ideas, namely, the perceptual ones, appear to be *given* to and *forced* on the mind by some other reality or realities. But according to Leibniz even perceptual ideas are evolved from within the mind, and passivity of the mind implies not its being acted upon by some other reality but only the perception's want of clearness (which again is due to the inherent imperfection of the mind monad[20]). How, therefore, does he come to believe in other monads, and in the harmony of their relations and God, the author of the harmony ? Leibniz seems to *take for granted* that corresponding to all phenomena perceived by the mind there are realities, and he does not realize the inconsistency of this assumption with the windowless character of his own mind.

It should be remarked, in conclusion, that many of the above difficulties caused by Leibniz's conception of the windowless monads can be found in every form of radical pluralism. There may be a kind of commonsense pluralism, pragmatic or otherwise, which believes in the plurality

20. *Cf. Monadology*, 49.

of reals, each of which can be regarded as a unit only for a certain purpose or *in a particular situation* or relation. A unit of reality, in this view, may, for another purpose or in another situation, either be split up into many units or be a part of a bigger unit. A pluralism of this kind is not forced to think of a real as windowless. But a pluralism which is *more thoroughgoing and believes that there are ultimate* units of reals having fixed natures or essences, commits itself necessarily to some form of 'windowless' theory. For, a real which remains unchanged and fixed in nature, can be conceived neither as receiving nor as parting with any content. All radical pluralism has to face, therefore, many of the difficulties to which Leibniz's theory of windowless monads is subject.

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2

RELIGION AND MORALITY

Religion as a Pursuit of Truth

1. Religion, Science, and Metaphysics in a Common Key

In the history of humanity up to the present, religion, science, and metaphysics have again and again met with different kinds of opposition, and they have also conflicted with one another. But they have continued their winding courses, overcoming all obstacles till the present day. One of the vital forces which have made this progress possible is what can be called sincerity. Sincerity, which produces earnestness, strength, and courage necessary for the pursuit of truth at all sacrifice can be said to be the common key underlying progress in religion, science, and metaphysics. Paradoxically enough, it has been both the source and solvent of conflict among these three major pursuits of man.

Sincerity, as the unconditional devotion to truth, opposes all compromise with untruth and resists deception and duplicity in thought, action, and emotion. Therefore, it fosters conflict between the habitual loyalty to the accepted and the nascent loyalty to truth newly perceived, espousing the case of the latter. But the conflict is solved if sincerity is real, persistent, and effective enough to be able to overthrow the yoke of superseded truths. Just as sincerity opposes the persistence of falsified beliefs in our cognitive life, it resists the sway of unjustified devotion to false ideals in emotional life, and also tries to reform the life of action by changing old ways rooted in exploded ideas and ideals. Sincerity helps, therefore, to remove the gap between thought and emotion, thought and action, and emotion and action. The sincere man is prompted to cultivate and discipline his emotions in accordance with the truth as he perceives it, he tries to live in the truth, and he acts as he genuinely feels. Sincerity thus makes for an integrated personal life, evolving and harmonizing conflicts.

In interpersonal behaviour, too, sincerity plays a similar and important role. While the sincere person comes into

frequent conflict with others because of his uncompromising attitude towards untruth, he also raises the moral level of society, to the extent that he can maintain his devotion to truth.

The greatest conflicts that sincerity has engendered and has also been called upon to solve in the history of mankind, are those between two persons or groups, or a person and a group, who are both apparently sincere but who firmly hold, as true, two opposite beliefs about things which cannot be easily or completely verified. The trial of Socrates, the crucifixion of Christ, the holy wars, the summoning of Galileo to the Inquisition, are but a few records of such conflicts. In most of these cases the vindication of truth and right has come through temporary discomfiture, suffering, and death, and by the ultimate verdict of distant posterity. In some cases no clear verdict has been pronounced by history. Yet, one thing is clear from history. The conflicting claims of truth are not settled by force of verbal conquest, legal authority, or lethal weapons. Where force temporarily silences the fair claim of truth, posterity, attracted by the sincere sacrifice of the condemned, reopens the case more sincerely and more dispassionately than the contemporary could, and bestows retrospective justice, and even raises the impugned sometimes to the rank of martyrs or prophets.

We must distinguish, then, between genuine sincerity and sincerity vitiated by motives other than truth. Unconditional regard for truth helps the genuinely sincere person rise above passions and biases which otherwise warp judgment. The earnest desire to know and live the truth makes the genuinely sincere man aware of the vastness, complexity, and profundity of truth, and helps him realize his ignorance and limitations. He thus feels humble and eager to look at things patiently from all points of view and to learn as much as he can from others as well. He acquires thus a spirit of tolerance and regard for others. Genuine sincerity, with its characteristic humility, patience, and selfless regard for truth, can more easily disarm suspicion, overcome opposition and resistance, and win the respect and confidence of others. Genuine sincerity can thus resolve conflicts in most cases; on the contrary, inadequate sincerity prejudiced by extraneous motives,

manifests itself in obstinate dogmatism, undue certainty, overweening self-righteousness, or aggressive fanaticism. It provokes antagonism and impassioned counterclaim, instead of resolving conflict.

It should be clearly understood, however, that there may be cases at issue where two genuinely sincere and equally wise persons dispassionately bent on the discovery of truth can logically arrive at opposite conclusions. So the conflict cannot disappear if truth must be upheld. But in such a case the persons should be able to discover, after patient scrutiny, that they start from different data or assumptions, equally permissible, or occupy different possible standpoints. They would then agree to differ, allowing each other the freedom of choice regarding equally permissible alternative premises and conclusions. Such ultimate differences, gracefully recognized, create neither bitterness nor mutual recrimination, but generate deeper understanding and appreciation of alternative possibilities.

2. The Common Failing

But such a dispassionate regard for truth is rare to find even among scientists who are reputed to be most objective, and is found less among partisans of religious and metaphysical theories, and still less sometimes among the advocates of so-called scientific philosophy. That religious and metaphysical controversialists are often swayed by forces other than regard for truth is commonly recognized. But to realize that scientists of even the present day are not exceptions, we have only to remember the influence of Marxism on scientific controversies regarding the biological role of heredity and environment, the influence of anti-Semitism and colour prejudice on ethnic and anthropological researches, the controversies between Japanese and American scientists regarding the effects of atomic explosions in the Pacific Ocean, and the controversies among medical authorities regarding the baneful effects of certain narcotics, medicines, foods, contraceptives, etc. Ideological, political, cultural, sectarian, mercenary, and self-protective motives and, more often, the subtle elements of

prestige creep in and warp even the scientist's judgment and cloud the perception and expression of truth.

As for those modern Western thinkers who are known as scientific philosophers, they start with the presupposition that empirical knowledge, based on the scientific methods of observation, experiment, measurement, induction and deduction, forms the whole field of genuine knowledge. This partial outlook, influenced by the phenomenal achievements of science in the knowledge and control of outer nature, ignores the possibility and importance of other spheres of human knowledge and experience. "Science" and "scientific" become words to conjure with, deluding the unwary into an implicit faith, just as "scriptures" and "scriptural" used to be in ancient times. Controversies among the logical positivists or scientific empiricists have revealed, during recent times, that they themselves are hardly in agreement about the meaning, scope, and methods of science, the meanings of meaning, law, truth, probability, etc., which are the fundamentals of science. Many of them even hold that only tautological propositions are certain. Yet they seem to feel certain that all knowledge and value rest in science and that metaphysics is meaningless, religion is an illusion, and so on.

The foregoing considerations would show how necessary it is to cultivate genuine sincerity and the accompanying moral qualities of humility, patience, and regard for the views of others who may afford some neglected aspects of truth. Religion, science, and metaphysics equally need these moral qualities, and by recognizing them these human pursuits acquire a higher level of perfection and also help one another. Even science, as the pursuit of truth in a limited sphere and a limited way, learns from genuine religion the spirit of unconditional devotion to truth, self-effacement, and an humble openness to the unknown, so necessary for the gradual widening of the horizon of science. And from metaphysics, whose speculation extends over the whole realm of reals, possibles, and illusions, science has always obtained many of its basic ideas and hypotheses (e.g., about space, time, matter, energy, etc.) as materials for stricter observational, experimental, and mathematical investigation.

It is instructive to note that the attempts to exaggerate the claims of science, and to belittle the scope and value of religion or metaphysics, have scarcely come from any of the great scientists (who possess the proverbial sincerity and humility of Newton and know their limitations), but mostly from those protagonists of science who move on the borderlands of science and philosophy and do not happen to have gone deeply into either. They have mostly sought to produce an effect on philosophers by talking over their heads in terms of science and mathematics which they condescend to interpret in behalf of science for the benefit of philosophers. The most instructive situation arises when some of them (e.g., Stebbing) try to warn philosophers against philosophical interpretations of science by the great scientists themselves, such as Eddington, Jeans, and Whitehead. As in religion, so also in science, the disciples often claim more than the master, and they rush in where he would fear to tread.

3. Religion Needs Science And Metaphysics

Genuine religion, as a sincere and total endeavour to live in the truth, needs the light of truth from all available sources. For the efficient and ideal management of his body, his mind, and the objects and persons that surround him, the religious man has always depended on the knowledge about them made available to his generation by the respective sciences. Scientific knowledge often adds so indirectly and imperceptibly to the general stock of knowledge of the community that the individual is not often aware that his food, clothes, shelter, medicine, implements and utensils, etc., have evolved from continued and systematic investigation by countless generations. Such systematized empirical knowledge, however crude or imperfect it may be, is the science of his age and country on which he always depends. Science is constantly progressing, and the science of today becomes the superstition of tomorrow. Yet a religious man, more than others, has to utilize the scientific knowledge of his times, as much for the knowledge of the world as for successfully working out his fuller destiny in and

through the world. In India, the earnest spiritual seekers realized the importance of the body, as well as of the mind, as a vehicle of spiritual progress, and they themselves carried on some valuable scientific investigations about food, medicine, the nervous system, physical and mental exercises, etc.

The conflicts between religion and science, as previously noted, arise from the side of religion, when it blindly clings to superseded science, and from the side of science, if it dogmatically denies the value and validity of knowledge and pursuits other than the empirical. The extreme partisans of both sides belie the genuine spirit of their respective disciplines. It is realized now at this distance of time how immaterial it is to genuine Christianity whether the earth moved round the sun or vice versa, whether the world was created six thousand years ago or not. A similar dispassionate judgment regarding the achievements of science should reveal that the knowledge attained and the methods adopted are so limited in their scope that even if Newton lived now he could still say, "We are but little children picking pebbles on the shore of the vast ocean of knowledge."

Science throws no light on the ultimate cause beyond or behind the space-time world, and neither proves nor disproves God and Soul. Mechanical explanation of phenomena is a methodological postulation made by science, and implies nothing about the presence or absence of a purposive cause. It is by forgetting its limitations that Freudian psychology tried to rush from its investigations about abnormal minds in a patriarchal Jewish-Christian society to the sweeping psycho-analytical explanation of religion as an illusion, and of God as the father image. The Marxist explanation of religion as a product of the fear of the unknown—which is thought now to have been dissipated by science—is equally oblivious of the insufficiency of the data and the hypothesis. Incidentally, it should be observed that science has been bringing to light the existence of so many distant regions of space and periods of time, and so many new mysteries of the atomic particles, that it is equally possible to say that science is generating an increasing sense of mystery of the Unknown, and must also be strengthening the religious consciousness, if it be based only

on the fear of the unknown. The new fear of total destruction to which science itself has exposed humanity may also incline some to invoke the help of a benign divine power.

Religion needs, even more than science, a metaphysics which inquires into the nature, ground, limits, and validity of all kinds of knowledge—empirical, scientific, as well as of other types (e.g., aesthetic, moral, noumenal, mystic). Metaphysics investigates the most universal structural elements of the known universe (e.g., cause-effect, substance-quality, space-time, subject-object, and appearance-reality, etc.), and attempts to reach the most comprehensive view of the known and the unknown, though it may sometimes end in scepticism or agnosticism. Religion needs metaphysics specially, because it is metaphysics which speculates most rationally about God, self, immortality, and the like. Every religion has some metaphysics, good or bad, at its back in at least an implicit form. The more explicit and rationally examined this metaphysical background, the stronger is the religious faith. And if it is thought that reason or any metaphysical system constructed by it is involved in contradictions or is incapable of throwing any light on ultimate things, this conclusion should be established by reason, as is done, for example, by some Advaita Vedāntins or Mādhyamika Buddhists who secure thereby their religious faiths with a formidable battery of destructive dialectic. On the other hand, religious experience has often tried to express itself, with reason, in metaphysics and make itself acceptable to others. It should be admitted, however, that religion has reason to complain against dogmatic and cocksure metaphysics which forgets its limitations and the possibility of other equally cogent metaphysical systems based on other postulates and standpoints—each of which may be the basis or support of a different kind of religious faith.

Religion can even profit by linguistic analysis in so far as it clarifies the meanings of ambiguous words which convey religious ideas. For example, before we try to answer questions like : Is God one ? Does God exist ? it is useful to clarify the meaning of "God", "one", "existence", and remove ambiguities. But here again it is the exaggerated claims of semantic

analysis, as a substitute for metaphysics, which unnecessarily create troubles. A sincere and realistic sense of limitations and the resultant humility can obviate conflict and promote concord among the different disciplines, as history has shown again and again.

4. Religion as Living in the Truth

Religion, as we conceive it, is living in the truth. It is an all-round dynamic sincerity—sincerity in thinking out a consistent view of Reality and attaining a coherent system of beliefs, and sincerity in letting our beliefs mould our emotions and actions. Religion is thus an all-round integral uplifting of life in the light of truth as envisaged and accepted by the individual. The contents of the system of beliefs may differ from individual to individual, and differ particularly with cultural traditions or local and temporal influences. Reality may be conceived to be one or many, indeterminate or determinate, conscious or unconscious, or some blend of these various types. There may be belief in the soul or not, in immortality or not, in one soul or many. The world may be conceived mechanistically or teleologically. There may be belief in one god, many gods, or even none. Yet each consistent system of beliefs sincerely moulding the entire life can rise to the status of a religion.

This conception of religion would appear, on the one hand, to be so loose and wide as to verge on atheism, and to be, on the other hand, so narrow as to exclude even the institutional religions lacking in sincerity. Regarding the first point, we have to remember that the word "religion" is now applied to all the faiths of the world, e.g., Christianity, Islam, Zoroastrianism, Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Shintoism, to say nothing of the less-known faiths or of the newly founded ones like the Positivist Religion of Auguste Comte and the naturalistic ones sponsored by some philosophers (e.g., Lloyd Morgan, Samuel Alexander, and George P. Conger). If this wide denotation is to be preserved, then the connotation of "religion" must necessarily be very limited.

Most Western theologians define "religion" in the light of

Hebrew-Christian theism, as a belief in a personal deity with its attendant expressions in thought, emotion, and will. They would exclude, therefore, Buddhism, Jainism, Taoism, Advaita Vedānta (belief in an ultimate, indeterminate absolute), and even the faith of a Spinoza or a Hegel or a Heidegger, from the denotation of "religion". But some open-minded Western thinkers—among whom we find the late Professor James Bissett Pratt—have been recognizing the possibility and value of other types of faith, like Buddhism, which are not theistic, and yet deserve to be esteemed as genuine types of religion.

What then would be the connotation of "religion" taken in the widest sense? We suggest that an all-round dynamic sincerity, expressed in the serious effort to live in the truth as envisaged by the individual concerned, may be regarded as his or her religion. Every kind of faith (including even Comte's Humanism) can be called a religion if it is found to possess the sincerity mentioned before. But would not this conception make religion too narrow, make it a matter of personal life, excluding religious institutions like Judaism, Christianity, or Hinduism? This is the second objection, previously raised, that demands an answer. We must confess that this objection holds if it is thought, as it is very often, that religion is a matter of verbal profession, or mere theoretical belief, or mere external formality, or affiliation to an organized church. But if genuine religion is to be distinguished from these outer expressions, the sincerity spoken of must form at least a part of the core of religion. A person has religion if he has this requisite sincerity, and not simply by belonging to a church or professing a faith.

This inner view of religion as a sincere endeavour to live in the truth can be found *in the different historical religions* in spite of their widely differing metaphysical backgrounds. One of the early Indian (Vedic) prayers is : Lead me from *a-sat* (unreal, untruth) to *sat* (real, truth), from *tamas* (darkness, ignorance) to *jyotis* (light, knowledge). *Sat* (real) and *satya* (truth) are almost synonymously used as the nearest expressions, pointing to the Inexpressible Infinite, Reality—the Brahman. "The universe is grounded in Truth", says the Mahābhārata, the great Indian epic. "Truth prevails, not untruth", says the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad. Truthfulness (*satya*

or *sunṛta*) comes to be regarded as one of the supreme virtues. Sincerity (*ārjava*), consisting in the practice of truthfulness in thought (*manas*), in speech (*vāchas*), and in action (*karman*) is an integral part of religious discipline in every one of the time-honoured paths of India—nontheistic (e.g., Sāṅkhya, Bauddha, Jaina), theistic (e.g., the various Vaiṣṇava types), and supertheistic (e.g., the Advaita Vedānta). One common truth accepted by all of them is that every living being (*jīva*) is a centre of value and potentiality for perfection. The sincere practice of this truth involved a "regard for life" and others, *ahiṁsā* (i.e., noninjury to life in thought, speech, and action), as another basic virtue like truthfulness. Sometimes *ahiṁsā* is regarded even as the supreme virtue (*parama-dharma*). Logically deduced from it are the three other virtues : (1) nonstealing (*asteya*), i.e., not to deprive anyone of the rightful means of living; (2) control of passion (*brahmacharya*), and (3) nongreed (*aparigraha*). These five, called the five great vows, and variously formulated, have been recognized, from the era of the Vedas to the more recent teachings of Gandhi, as essential for all the great paths. These virtues, along with others derived from them, are called, distributively, *dharmas* and, collectively, *dharma*, which is now used for "religion" in Indian languages.

We can distinguish in Indian thought three deepening notions of truthfulness (*satya*) : (1) speaking the truth, (2) speaking gently what is true and also good, and (3) practising what is true and good. The first is simple veracity. The second (also called *sunṛta*) incorporates gentleness and goodness in a richer truthfulness. The third sense makes *satya* (truthfulness) equivalent to virtue in general—all forms of true and good living. It is in this comprehensive sense that the Mahābhārata (in Śāntiparvan) describes the thirteen virtues (veracity, equanimity, self-control, non-jealousy, sense of shame, endurance, nonenvy, sacrifice, concentration, nobility, fortitude, compassion, and harmlessness) as but the thirteen forms of truthfulness (*satya*). In this last and comprehensive conception, *satya* becomes equivalent to *dharma*, religion. Truth, cultivated with sincerity (*ārjava*, as the epic calls it), enlightens the will, controls passions, rouses good emotions, strengthens the character, enables the individual to sacrifice

his attachment to the lesser perishable goods made attractive by ignorance and infatuation. Truth emancipates the self from infatuating ignorance (*moha*) and leads to immortality (*amṛta*), says the epic. It declares : "The secret of the Veda is truth, that of truth is self-control, that of self-control is emancipation." And it is by emancipating the self from ignorance, selfish passions and attachment to the perishable that truth, effective in life, raises the self above perishability, that is, to immortality.

We find in modern India the reappearance of this line of thought in the socio-religious political leader M. K. Gandhi, who comes to adore truth as God, endeavours sincerely to live in the truth in every sphere of life, and invents a truthful and non-violent method of redressing all wrongs. This method he names *Satyāgraha* (sticking to the truth). He describes his own life as *My Experiments with Truth*. He aims at spiritual emancipation through a truthful life of selfless service. He regards morality as the essence of religion, though personally he was a devout theist.

In Zoroastrianism, the other cognate Aryan faith, morality has the highest place. Ahura Mazda, the god of light and righteousness, enables the religious man to overcome the forces of evil through pure thought, pure word, and pure deed. The Vedic *Ṛta* (righteousness, truth) becomes here *Asha* (symbolized by fire), truth and right, the ideal of a religious man.

Turning to the Hebrew-Christian tradition we can find ample evidence of the great importance given to truth and sincerity for religious life. The Old Testament shows the model of sincere faith in the character of Job, who patiently suffers the terrible ordeals of bereavement, impoverishment, dire bodily affliction, and social humiliation, and yet budges not from the truth he accepts. The life and death of Christ provide the classical example of abiding in the truth at all costs—including the sacrifice of life itself. He teaches the redeeming power of truth : "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." In the Confessions of St. Augustine we have again the luminous example of a religious soul revelling in sincerity. In more recent times, we have in Kierkegaard, the revolt of sincere faith against all formal and

external religiosity: "I want honesty, neither more nor less, I stand for neither Christian severity nor for Christian mildness; I stand solely and simply for common human honesty."

In Islam, God is also called the Truth (*Haq*), and the importance of truthfulness is taught by the story that a man who tries to deceive a horse into captivity by the false show of grain is deemed unfit to become a disciple of the prophet. Sufism aims at a mystic union of the self with the Truth (*An al Haq*).

Both Confucianism and Taoism lay exclusive emphasis on truth, sincerity, and fidelity; the former teaches man to be true to his own human nature (*jen*), and the latter teaches him to be true to the Way (*Tao*), the eternal principle underlying the entire cosmos. The Zen Buddhism of Japan lays aside all formality, and goes straight to the inner nature of man, trying to regenerate it for immediate realization of truth.

In every one of the historical religions we find two parallel streams—a surface one abounding in dogmas, doctrines, ostentations, rituals and ceremonies, and, on the deeper level, a mystic current of inner seeking and genuine becoming. The latter expresses the revolt of sincerity against formality. And there is a wonderful similarity among these mystic phases of all great religions, in spite of their doctrinal differences. Sincerity, honesty, humility, firmness, and the wealth of inner transformation are the common possession of all mysticisms. We are reminded again and again that genuine religion consists in sincere living in the truth, however it may be formulated.

5. Through Truths towards Truth and Beyond

Religion, as the individual's sincere endeavour to abide in the truth, has necessarily to start with the limited aspects of truth, or truths as grasped by him under peculiar physical, mental, and cultural conditions. These latter define for every individual his own unique religious life. Again, as sincerity cannot be imposed from outside, religion must necessarily grow from within. Religiosity is not religion; as a kind of insincerity it is inimical to religion. But in spite of this uniquely personal and internal nature of religion, it has also a universal tendency born of its regard for truth. The inner dialectic of

sincerity makes the religious soul constantly strive for fuller and purer views of truth, correcting the sources of self-deception, and learning from other devout souls. The dialectic of religious experience acquires momentum and self-correcting power, in so far as the entire personality—intellect, emotion, and will—is thrown into the effort, so that no truth satisfies, unless it can satisfy the entire personality. The inner evolution of an earnest and sincere soul has always been in restless pursuit of a perfect deity that would satisfy the ideals of truth, love, and goodness.

The Infinite and the Perfect have always been, therefore, the lure of the religious soul; and, though unattained, the uplifting effort for the ideal has proved the most exhilarating task, the pang of separation the most enjoyable of all bereavements, the insolubility of ultimate problems the most sacredly guarded mystery. Humanity has nothing but cause for gratitude to the few genuine religious persons it has produced. For, wisdom, honesty, humility, love, firmness, courage, sacrifice, and other similar virtues, which make for human progress and survival, have been exemplified most by these few. They remain the undying sources of inspiration to the major part of humanity. But the inner prize which sustains them in their all-absorbing uphill enterprise is best known to them. To denounce religion because it has been used as a cloak and pretext for shameful vices is to denounce truth because it has been the mask under which falsehood and deception have ever stalked the world. Shams are found out and shed on the way. Religion in pursuit of truth—infinite and perfect—goes on for ever.

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Symbolism in Religion

Signs and meanings pervade the whole realm of human experience; they also play an important part in the life of lower animals. Observation of animal behaviour in nature, and experiments with animals like those performed by Pavlov, clearly show how lower animals gradually learn and develop conditioned reflexes by complicated chains of signs and meanings. A raised stick means nothing to a new-born pup; but after some beatings with a stick, it becomes a *sign* of danger, it *means* a source of pain. Similarly, the reflex action of salivation primarily caused by the placing of food on the dog's tongue, may be caused by the sight of the dish or of the feeder, or by the sound of the dinner bell, and so on. All of these latter can become, therefore, *signs* of 'food' and may, thus, *mean* its advent. Learning by experience involves the capacity for taking something as the sign of some other thing. Without this capacity for attaching meanings to events, anticipation of the future, or preparation for it, would have been impossible, and there would have been no difference between the behaviour of the new-born pup and the experienced dog.

What is true of lower animals is much more true of men. It is a commonplace of psychology that an uninterpreted sensation does not amount to any perception. The sensation of one quality, say, a round patch of orange colour, is taken by the new-born baby just as such; but the adult attaches *meaning* to it, and it becomes for him a sign for the existence of all other qualities like soft touch, sweet smell, sweetish-acid taste, some weight, etc. The anticipation of these other qualities carries with it also the belief that it is a substance. Similarly, a sensed surface comes to *mean* the presence of an interior; a part (e.g. a face) signifies the presence of a whole (the entire man). The passage of the mind from the sensed aspect to the unsensed becomes so deep-rooted and automatic with the growth of experience that it requires a little psychological training to be able to distinguish between the given and the not-given, the sign and what it means or represents. A man in the street

scarcely suspects that while he is seeing only a patch of orange colour, he is *not* really seeing the entire orange fruit, having all other qualities and all other parts (back, bottom and interior). Repeated experience often leads to a kind of *identity* between the immediately presented and the unpresented, the sign and what it only means. It is thus that cotton can *look* soft, ice can *look* cold, a razor can *look* sharp, a man can *look* angry or pleased. In the first three cases sight does not simply *lead* the mind to touch; the look itself becomes soft, cold, sharp; in the last case the look does not simply make the mind think of or infer anger as its cause, but the look itself becomes angry. The sign and the signified become one, the mind does not feel that it is passing *from* the one *to* the other; but it finds the second *in* the first.

In memory the story of perception is repeated. The image of one particular aspect of a thing or an event stands for the whole. But in addition to this, there is the further point that in order that a memory image may take the mind back to the past object and make it *believe* in the past, there must be a kind of *identity* between the *present* image and the *past* object. Here, again, we find the fusion of the sign and the signified.

In conception (or the formation of a general idea) we have either an abstract idea containing the common and essential elements of all members (as conceptualists think) or the image of a particular member *standing for* the whole class (as nominalists hold). In the former case, the general idea devoid of the ideas of individual peculiarities can *stand for* each member possessed of *both* general and peculiar characters only by some process of symbolic substitution, since the two are not identical. In the latter case also, one particular member can *stand for* other particular members of the class by a similar process. In both cases we find then the sign-signified kind of relation.

Thinking, as a preparation for meeting future situations, is the mental rehearsal of possible future situations and possible reactions to find out the best possible course of action. As it is carried through concepts which have been just shown to be of the nature of some signs having meanings, thinking is described by some thinkers, like Dewey, as a symbolic operation.

In syllogistic inference we can pass from the known to the unknown only through some middle term, which has been found, in past experience, to be so related to what is not given (here) or the unknown, that it can stand as a sign and guarantee of the presence of it in other unobserved cases. So in Indian Logic the middle term is described as the mark or sign (*linga*) and inference is sometimes described as a kind of knowledge obtained through a sign.

This brief consideration of the different stages and aspects of human knowledge and animal behaviour would clearly show the extensive *role* played by signs and meanings in human and animal life. The basis of the relation between a sign and what it means lies in the possibility of one thing standing for another; and we have found that in some cases the relation between the sign and the signified can mature into one of identity.

But signs can be either natural or arbitrary. The examples cited so far are those of natural signs, that is, signs which are not consciously or voluntarily chosen by any animal or man. In some cases, owing to some natural affinities, one thing automatically becomes a sign of some other thing by the laws of conditioned reflex or association of ideas. But there are other cases where signs are adopted consciously by a human individual or a group of such individuals, to represent certain other things, for the sake of convenience or on any other ground. The word 'symbol' is generally used for such an adopted or conventional sign, though it is sometimes used in a wider sense also as a synonym for sign. The words of a language, the letters of an alphabet, the signs of algebra and other sciences, the abbreviations used in any kind of literature are symbols in the *narrower sense of the term.*

The process by which in such cases the human mind can treat something as a symbol of another, is one of *repeated thinking of the one as the other.* As this process matures more and more, the symbol becomes more and more of a symbol and less and less of what it is as such. To take an example, the letters, 'man', would appear to be mere black marks of particular shapes to the illiterate; to the newly initiated they will appear as such marks and shapes *with* some meaning; but to the adept deeply absorbed in reading a book in which this word occurs,

the letters, as black marks with shapes, will scarcely make their appearance; they will be nearly all meaning. The process of converting something into a symbol is, therefore, a training in attention. Attention may be fixed on the thing itself and it is then no symbol. It may swing between the thing and what it stands for. There is then a *partial symbol*. Finally, attention may be fully shifted to the symbolized; then there is a *full symbol*. When this training in attention is complete, the symbol will no longer attract any attention to itself; it will become thoroughly transparent, or, in the words of Bradley, it will forgo "individuality and self-existence". Such is the case when we read a book with rapt attention and find in the written words nothing but ideas. As soon as attention is shifted back to the letters, the links of thought are snapped by the opaque marks on paper.

II

We shall briefly examine in this paper the *role* of symbolism in Religion in the light of facts disclosed in the foregoing discussion. As Religion is a human affair involving feeling, perception, memory, conception, reasoning and language, it can be deduced *a priori* that it cannot be free from the use of signs which, as we have seen, pervade these different aspects of human life. Some of the signs found in Religion are natural and some are more or less arbitrary. The former are common to almost all religions and the latter are peculiar to particular religions.

Let us examine first the different conceptions of God. The idea of God in the mind of a pluralistic animist does not seem to involve any more use of signs than what we have found previously to be present in ordinary cases of perception. A tree or a stone as perceived by the animist is a deity, a spirit dwelling in a body, like a human being. Such a visible object of 'worship' makes mediate approach through any sign unnecessary, except that the material body of the deity is taken as a sign and guarantee of the indwelling spirit which, as such, cannot be perceived. There is thus a partial symbolism here.

Deism, theism and pantheism all conceive God as a Spirit.

But while according to deism the Divine is wholly transcendent, according to some forms of theism, God is also immanent in the world, and according to some forms of pantheism, God is wholly immanent. The conception of the divine spirit being nearly unintelligible except through something of which we have a direct consciousness, all these theories of God take the help of our own spirit for understanding God. As a result of this, the conception of God becomes anthropomorphic. God is described in terms of man, the embodied spirit. These descriptions are drawn from the qualities of the human spirit and sometimes mixed up with those of the human body. Examples of these we find in the conceptions of God as father, son, ruler, maker, friend, companion, lover, judge, etc., as denotable by masculine nouns and pronouns, and as capable of being enraged or propitiated, as having purpose and will, and so on. Most of these anthropomorphic descriptions cannot be taken at their face values because they cannot be applied literally to the perfect and bodiless spirit. In these circumstances, they have to be taken as symbolic descriptions standing for meanings other than what they apparently are. Anthropomorphism thus entails symbolism.

In a similar manner, if God is *really* believed to be spiritual and at the same time He is described to be 'all-pervasive', it is necessary to give up the ordinary meaning of 'pervasion' (which implies extension in space like a material substance) and take it as *standing for* some other meaning compatible with the immaterial nature of a spirit. If, again, God is believed to be infinite, then the description of Him as one has also to be taken in some non-literal or symbolic sense, since the question of numbering can strictly apply only to what can be measured with some unit, and not to the immeasurable. Presence of symbolism can be traced, similarly, in many other attributes of God.

Turning from the conceptions of God to other religious phenomena also, we can find a great many examples of symbolism. Consider, for instance, the different physical postures like bowing, bending, kneeling, falling prostrate, folding the palms, touching the ears, which are found in the different religions of the world. These physical operations

may be taken by some religions to have some magical influence or physiological efficacy. But in most of the advanced religions they are but symbolic expressions of mental attitudes towards God. Take, again, the rituals and ceremonies of different kinds which consist of certain physical operations with, or on, different kinds of materials—sacrifice, oblation, burning of lights and incense, ablution, tonsure, circumcision, eucharist and endless other performances. In religions which inculcate them not for any magical virtue, there must be some spiritual meanings for which these material operations stand. So these ceremonies must have to be taken as material symbols aiming at spiritual purposes. We cannot, again, understand why temples, churches, tabernacles, crosses, crescents, swastikas, particular places and rivers can be treated as sacred, and can claim veneration from devotees who believe only in One Spiritual Being, called God, unless these are treated as *Symbols* possessing some *spiritual meanings*.

It is found, therefore, that use of symbols is not by any means confined to the worshippers of idols, but, on the contrary, that it is present in various forms among the followers of other faiths too.

III

Among the Hindus the use of different kinds of symbols for the meditation on God is prevalent. Natural phenomena like the sun, fire, parts of the body, mental faculties, mystic letters, prepared images, etc., are used for various kinds of worship. But all of these are *consciously* adopted as symbols. This is obvious from the *mantras* which are cited for invoking the Deity into the symbol, and for bidding farewell to Him and discarding the symbol when the worship is over. In fact, in one of the *mantras* cited for such farewell the worshipper expressly begs to be pardoned for imparting finite form to the formless Infinite, for ascribing qualities to that which transcends all assignable qualities, and so on. In spite of the conception of God as a pure infinite and formless spirit, symbols are chosen for aiding meditation.

Though the monistic school of Vedānta does not only hold,

like the other Indian theists, that God is a pure, infinite spirit, but also contends that in His true aspect God is beyond the reach of any attribute that the mind may predicate of Him, yet it recognizes the utility of meditation through finite symbols. The fact is that all Indian schools of religion and philosophy unanimously recognize that men differ in tastes, aptitudes and abilities and that all things are not suitable for all persons. In all Indian systems of training,—philosophical, religious and of other kinds,—there are graduated courses consisting of successive stages suited to different individuals. The attempt always is to lead the aspirant step by step to the highest realization of truth, or to the highest perfection of the self.

It is found, therefore, that the Upaniṣadic teachers impart the knowledge of the highest Absolute by successively asking the pupil to think of it as the body, as vitality, as sensitivity, as thought, and as bliss or joy. Similarly, for the realization of the Absolute which, according to them, is the only reality underlying all phenomena, the disciple is asked to think of the sun as the Absolute, the mind as the Absolute, and so on. Even Śaṅkara, who is unwilling to concede that the Absolute can really possess any form or attribute, recognizes that the worship through the medium of an image is useful for a person of a lower stage.

But a vital distinction is made by Śaṅkara and others between two possible attitudes with which a worshipper can treat a symbol, say the sun. The sun may be contemplated as Brahman, or Brahman may be contemplated as the sun. The former alone is commended as the right attitude since it can gradually elevate the mind from the sun (or the world), the manifestation of the Absolute, to the Absolute, whereas the the latter drags the mind down from the Absolute to the manifestation.

Symbolism can, therefore, be both elevating and degrading, and it depends on the attitude. Worship through image may degenerate into idolatry, if *God* is contemplated as the image instead of contemplating the *image* as God. From the stand-point of monistic Vedānta contemplation of God as endowed with human qualities like will, mercy, justice and the like is a kind of subtle idolatry which drags the attributeless

to the level of its manifestations. The goal must be to reduce by repeated contemplation the phenomenal world into God, and not God into the world.

The possibility of reducing the symbol to the symbolized has already been pointed out in the previous sections with the help of examples like written letters. In reading a book the trained reader does not attend to the letters but the ideas which they signify. The letters become complete symbols by sacrificing their private existence for the sake of their meanings. They become transparent and let the ideas shine forth through them. It is quite possible, therefore, that by repeated contemplation the devotee can reduce his chosen symbol to a full symbol, so that it may fully abnegate its private existence, cease to attract any attention to itself and stand transparent before the worshipper to let the idea of God alone shine through it. The idol made of matter can thus be idealized completely into God. As Rāmakṛṣṇa used to say, "The image of clay (mṛṇmayī) is the Mother Spiritual (chinmayī)". Extension of this practice to other objects of the world can, if successful, make it possible for the world as a whole to act as a symbol of God.

Symbolic worship of this kind is not, however, taken by the monistic Vedānta as the only spiritual discipline necessary for the perfect realization of the Absolute. It is *one* of the methods calculated to remove the obstacle to perfection arising out of a wrong belief in the absolute reality of the world, and the consequent attachment to its objects. But it must be supplemented by other methods which fall outside the scope of our present discussion.

We may sum up now the salient points emerging out of this brief discussion. Signs and meanings play an important part in the development of learning and knowledge in men, and even in lower animals. Every form of religion, from animism to Absolute monism, abounds with different kinds of symbolism, which is not, therefore, confined only to idol-worship. Symbolism can elevate as well as degrade the devotee, according as the symbol is mentally reduced to God or God is reduced to the symbol. The Vedānta makes this explicit distinction and commends the elevating type of symbolism.

Anthropomorphism, present in most other religions, encourages the other type. From different examples of ordinary life, it is reasonable to suppose that a material symbol can be wholly reduced to its spiritual meaning.*

*The controversial Freudian explanation of religious symbols was purposely omitted in this short paper.

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Inward and Outward Advaita Vedānta

Advaita Vedānta teaches all-round non-dualism. It tries to establish the ultimate untenability of the apparent duality of cause and effect, subject and object, Brahman and the world, and Brahman and the individual. If one accepts the truth of Advaita (non-dualism), in which direction then should one try for its assimilation (paripāka) in life—inwards, or outwards, or both ways, or in neither of these ways?

It is very often said that not only Advaita, but Indian spiritual discipline in general is a process of inward deepening, and a consequent withdrawal from the outer world. It is also very often supposed that the concern for society and the world so often found in modern Indian Vedāntic thinkers is really a result of the impact of western thought, and has little or no roots in ancient Vedānta.

We shall try to show here that this widespread idea does not represent even half the truth about even Advaita discipline (sādhanā) which has to grapple with the outer and the inner, dive in and plunge out, withdraw as well as expand, and even transcend these opposing attitudes based on a mistaken distinction between the outer and the inner. Let us consider these different phases of Advaita discipline, step by step, and try to understand their significance for the Advaita goal.

I

Assuming the central truth of Advaita Vedānta that Brahman is the sole self-subsistent, immutable reality underlying all changing outer and inner phenomena, and is the highest value, it is easily seen that the two most obvious obstacles to the assimilation of this truth are the outer world and the inner ego (*aham*), both of which claim independent reality and value, and generate perpetual attachment and entanglement.

It is to get over the first obstacle that Vedānta, from the earliest Upaniṣadic times, recommends, in addition to reason-

ing, withdrawal (*dama*) of the senses from the objects (*viṣaya*) of the world, withdrawal (*śama*) of the mind too, and abstinence (*uparati*) from desires for objects. The inward retraction is the reversal (*parāvṛtti*) of the outgoing (*parāk*) tendency of subtler, inner (*pratyak*) forces. The subtle (*sūkṣma*) cravings (*vāsanā*) for objects generate ideas of objects in the intellect (*buddhi* or *vijñāna*); these, in their turn, impel the sense-ward mind (*manas*) to flow through some outer sense (*indriya*) to an external object (*viṣaya*), which is obtained or avoided with the help of the motor organs, according as it is pleasant or unpleasant. This pleasure-seeking mechanism progressively externalizing itself encrusts, so to say, the Ātman (or Brahman) in a fivefold sheath (*pañchakośa*)[1] composed of pleasure (*ānanda*), intellect (*vijñāna*), mind (*manas*), sensory vital organs (*prāṇa*) and the outer body (*annamaya śarīra*). *Identification of the* Ātman with this mechanism turns it into a finite and selfish ego (*aham*) and entangles it in the world. Inward attention and retraction are necessary for dissociating the Ātman or true self from this fivefold entangling mechanism that enslaves the self, and makes it run after the perishable objects of the world in search of pleasures that allure it, but never satisfy it. Inwardization of the mind is the logical result of the philosophic conviction (about objects being devoid of abiding value) which causes non-attachment (*vairāgya*). The inward search for Ātman, the real, abiding self of man, is also pursued, in another way, through the states of waking, dreaming and dreamless sleep, ascertaining thereby that objects are not necessary for the self's intrinsic consciousness which persists even in dreamless sleep wherein objects disappear.

This inwardizing tendency is noticed throughout the history of Indian thought, and not only in Vedānta, but also in all other non-materialistic schools which believe that the world of outer objects is an obstacle to spiritual progress. So renunciation (*tyāga*), non-attachment (*vairāgya*), sense-control (*indriya-nigraha*), abstinence (*nivṛtti*), inward vision (*antardṛṣṭi*) and self-introspection (*ātmadṛṣṭi*) have passed current in Indian literature

1. Taittirīya, 2.1-5.
2. Bṛhadāraṇyaka, 4.3.

as terms of praise. There is no doubt, again, that this has been more true of the monistic Advaita Vedānta, which admits Brahman as the only ultimate reality and value, than of the dualistic or pluralistic systems.

II

But this is only one side of the picture, even in respect of Advaita, not to speak of the other schools of thought. As we have seen, the Advaitin has to practise withdrawal and retraction, not for its own sake, but for being able to dissociate and discriminate his real self (*ātman*) not only from the outer objects, but also from the subtler and inner sheaths by identification with which the self behaves, through ignorance, as a finite and selfish ego (*aham*). To get rid of the ego is a much more difficult part of the Advaitin's *sādhanā* than to withdraw from the outer world. An aspirant who only succeeds in restraining his outer organs and activities, but fails to control the inner mechanism with which the pleasure-seeking ego tries to entangle the self, falls a prey to lethargy and self-deception. It has been so often the case that the Bhagavad-Gītā has to warn even Arjuna against such a perverted introversion: "One who arrests the organs of action, and yet inwardly thinks of sensuous objects, confounds himself; he is called a deceiver."[3]

As the ego is nothing but the self assuming, under infatuation, the changing roles of a perceiver, actor, and enjoyer, the Advaitin tries to rise above the bondage of the ego by concentration on unchanging consciousness as such which abides through all the changing modes of it. For him, that is the self (*ātman*) or the reality underlying man. Reality, as Śaṅkara[4] conceives it, is the immutable (*avyabhichārī*) ground of all changing phenomena. Rising above the inner phenomena the Advaitin tries to look at them as a detached and unchanging witnessing consciousness (*sākṣi-chaitanya*).[5] He cultivates then the attitude of a witness towards the outer world as well. This helps him

3. Gītā, 3.6.
4. On Chhāndogya, 6.2.2., *et passim*.
5. Pañchadaśī, 3.22.

attain the peak of subjective consciousness (*kūṭastha-chaitanya*)[6] from where he can look on objects with a dispassionate attitude, and loosen the ties (*granthi*) of the selfish ego.

But even this, though enough for the dualistic Sāṅkhya, is not the last step for the monistic Advaita. The attitude of the witness (*sākṣin*) implies the witnessed world that confronts it. The peak (*kūṭa*) implies the surrounding phenomenal plains. The Advaitin must transcend this duality, the sense of being excluded by something which spells for him confinement in the subjective. He can overcome this obstacle of subjectivity by making the ego realize that the immutable self, or the reality in which it is grounded, is also the self or reality underlying the outer world. "He who is in man, He who is in the Sun, He is one."[7] "That which is here (in the self) is out there, that which is there is here. One who sees as if there were many gets into veritable death."[8] The feeling of unity with the infinite reality (Brahman) enables the ego to burst the confines of narrow subjectivity, and expand into unfettered self or Ātman that utters: "I am *Brahman*."[9] Without this expansion, even in spite of the deepest inwardization into pure subjectivity, that great Upaniṣadic saying can but mean, "*I* am Brahman", reducing Brahman to only one of its aspects.

The inward search for the reality in man, and the inner realization are, therefore, logically incomplete without the outward search, and realization that the same Brahman is the Ātman, the Reality underlying the inner and the outer. From the earliest times, therefore, we find in the Upaniṣads the patient causal enquiry into the immutable ground of all changing outer phenomena, and the ultimate discovery of the abiding Reality (*Sat*) persisting through all changes. The result is summed up by the great dictum—"All this is Brahman."[10] The Upaniṣads prescribe series of meditations on different natural objects as the manifestations of Brahman.[11]

6. *Ibid.*, Kūtastha-dīpa.
7. Taittirīya, 3.10.4.
8. Katha, 4.10.
9. Bṛhadāraṇyaka, 1.4.10.
10. Chhāndogya, 3.14.1.
11. *Ibid.*, *et passim*.

For a complete spiritual education of Arjuna, the Gītā makes him see God manifested in the different orders of existence in the Universe.[12] It says, "One who has contacted the Self through yoga sees, with an equal eye, the Self in all beings and all beings in the Self." "He who sees me (God) everywhere, and sees everything in me never misses me."[13] Bādarāyaṇa in his Brahma-sūtra, Śaṅkara in his various works and all the major exponents of Śaṅkara's Advaita system carry forward the early tradition, stressing the necessity of realizing Brahman within and without.

One who has realized the Advaita truth in its fulness experiences an ecstatic *expansion* of his self, as reported in the Upaniṣads and later Advaita works. "One who knows 'I am Brahman', he becomes it all." "Knowing this, the sage Vāmadeva felt, 'I have become Manu, and also the Sun'."[14] Śaṅkara echoes this utterance of the Bṛhadāraṇyaka in his Upadeśa-sāhasrī in which the enlightened soul exclaims, "I am all-pervasive (*sarvagata*)." His great follower, Vidyāraṇya, describes, in his famous book of Advaita realization, how the world of objects (*viṣaya*) reflec's, to a person who has realized Brahman, the infinite joy (*ānanda*) that Brahman is.[15]

It should be clear, therefore, that the complete and integral Advaita discipline must be both inwards and outwards. But if we remember that the inner and outer are only physical images applicable literally only to the world of distinctions, we must also say that ultimately this discipline culminates in a unitary experience which "knows neither the outer, nor the inner".[16] So it can be said that those who think of Advaita as an inward withdrawal do not get at even half the truth.

III

If this integral teaching of Advaita Vedānta is grasped, it is not difficult to see that by showing that the real self of man is

12. Gita, Chap. 11.
13. *Ibid.*, 6.29-30.
14. Bṛhadāranyaka, 1.4.10. *Cf.* Taittirīya, 3.10.61 : "Aham viśvam bhuvanam abhyabhavam."
15. Panchadaśī, Chap. 15.
16. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, 4. 3.21.

one with the Self of the universe, and by removing thereby the belief in the narrow ego that prompts all selfish and anti-social impulses, Advaita can positively promote a genuine love and regard for fellow beings, so necessary for moral activity, social service and human harmony. The whole of the Īśāvāsya Upaniṣad, among the earliest monistic works, is devoted to the strong denunciation of one-sided, lethargic spirituality as being worse than even blind worldliness. It presents an integral, balanced outlook that reconciles knowledge and action, enjoyment and renunciation, being and becoming, the mundane and the spiritual. On a much larger scale the Gītā presents also the same integral philosophy of life, particularly emphasizing the importance of the social and moral qualities necessary for the realization of Brahman. The great Purāṇa, the Bhāgavata, teaches the *threefold Advaita*, to be cultivated (a) in thought, by trying to realize the presence of one reality underlying all causes and effects, (b) in action, by replacing the ego by Brahman as the centre of all efforts, in thought, speech and outer bodily movements, and (c) in feeling, by trying to realize the unity that underlies the diverse interests and desires of oneself and other beings (who represent, in fragmentary ways, the Brahman, the ultimate enjoyer of all objects).[17,18] This monistic belief in all men being the finite manifestations of one Brahman logically leads the Bhāgavata to conceive an ideal social organization based on love (*prema*), friendship (*maitrī*), kindness (*kṛpā*), forbearance (*upekṣā*) and non-attachment (*asaṅga*). Applying the last principle to materal possession, the Bhāgavata lays down a striking code for personal property and social justice: "Every person has a right to as much as would fill his belly. He who owns more is a thief; he deserves punishment."[19]

Śaṅkarāchārya systematized logically the earlier monistic ideas, and founded the regular Advaita school. Though he distinguished the world of finite, transitory and relative objects from the immutable, infinite and absolute reality, called Brahman, he distinguished the former also from the subjective world of dreams and hallucinations, and also, of course, from

17 & 18. *Bhāgavata*, 7.15.62-65.
19. *Ibid.*, 11.2.45-46, 7.14.

the utterly unreal objects like the son of a barren woman. The world was, for him, a manifestation of Brahman, and grounded in Brahman.[20] Taken in this philosophical perspective, the world points to its ground (*adhiṣṭhāna*); its values can be, and should be, utilized and re-organized for the attainment of Brahman, the Absolute Value (*paramārtha*).[21] The instrumental values alone can lead to the ultimate value. It is through the world that Brahman can be attained. Śaṅkara's life and teachings reflect, therefore, the integral outlook in which the transitory and the immutable, the finite and the infinite, the means and the end are logically integrated in a system of ascending grades of reality and value, in which social organization (*loka-saṅgraha*)[22] also had an important place. This outlook is aptly named by K. C. Bhattacharya as "spiritual realism".[23]

During the decadent period of Indian social life, the fuller Advaita of Śaṅkara became divorced from life (*vyavahāra*), and became a mere intellectual sport in the hands of some followers, "encouraging a premature quietism".[24]

In revitalizing Indian life, the leaders of modern Indian renaissance—Rammohan Roy, Vivekananda, Tilak, Tagore, Gandhi, Aurovindo, Vinoba and others—hark back to the integral outlook of the earlier Vedānta. It must be admitted that the impact of the West and the pressure of modern circumstances made the great modern Indians dig down to earlier teachings for a sounder philosophical foundation of personal and national life, suiting spiritual traditions and the demands of mundane conditions. So, while shifting emphasis to the outer world and practical life, none lost sight of the spiritual values to which the personal, social and national life should be progressively affiliated.

It is found thus that, except for some occasional mispresentations during periods of decadence, Advaita Vedānta tries to give due importance to the outer life in the world, as to the inner life; it is not a philosophy of one-sided withdrawal alone.

20. His Bhāṣya on *Brahma-sūt.*, 2.1.14-20.
21. *Ibid.*, 2.1.11.
22. Bhāṣya on *Gita*, 3.20.
23. K. C. Bhattacharya, *Studies in Philosophy*, Vol. I, p. 122 (Progressive Publishers, Calcutta, 1956).
24. *Ibid.*, p. 123.

The Moral Conception of Nature in Indian Philosophy

It is difficult to understand the real significance of the theories of nature that we find in the Indian philosophical systems, and specially if we look at them from Western angles of vision. The reason is that though we find here outwardly the analogues of different Western conceptions, naturalistic and idealistic, mechanistic and teleological, the outlook which inspires the Indian theories is quite different from the Western ones. With the exception of the Chārvāka, or allied schools of materialism, any systematic account of which is not available, all Indian schools conceive nature as the stage for moral beings, constituted and guided by moral needs. This holds good not only of theistic schools but also of the atheistic ones like the Bauddha, the Jaina, and the Mīmāṁsaka.

Nature, broadly speaking, consists of two parts—the organisms of individuals and their environment. The organism consists of the body, with the organs of sensation and movement, collectively called the *indriyas* (instruments of knowledge and activity). The environment consists of all extra-organic objects. Nature, organic or extra-organic, is conceived as being governed by a law or laws which promote and subserve the moral interests of individuals. The organism of the individual and the environment in which he finds himself in this life are not accidentally or fortuitously constructed; they obey a law which is conceived sometimes as the law of a moral administrator of the world, and sometimes as an impersonal law which acts spontaneously. This law may be broadly described as the law of conservation of moral values. The function of it is to equip the individual with the body and the environment which his past career entitles him to. Nature and the events of nature, good and bad, which form the common environment of the people of an age or a country are just what are deserved by all of them according to their common moral worth. A society or all the societies that live in a particular age are not formed by accidental

births, but predetermined by the moral affinities that exist among the different individual members.

One will be tempted to call this conception of nature anthropomorphic. But really it is not so. The conception of individual here is not confined to the *homo sapiens*; it is wide enough to include all sentient or living beings which form a progressive series of individuals beginning from plants and ending with men or sometimes with the *devas* or the superhuman deities.

The law of the conservation of moral values, which governs nature, is differently conceived in different contexts, and it is variously named as *ṛta*, *karma*, *apūrva*, and *adṛṣṭa* by different schools. We shall give a brief account of these here and try to show how they give, in different ways, a moral turn to the conception of nature.

The conception of *ṛta* is an old Aryan one and it is found in some very ancient literature. In the Vedas it is conceived as a law which is embodied in harmonious and orderly movements of the planets and it is described sometimes, in connection with the praise of deities, as the law by which they rule the world. In course of time *ṛta* acquired a moral significance and came to mean truth. This transformation was not accidental. The general idea which frequently inspired the thoughts of the ancient sages, namely, that the substance or the reality in nature was the same as that in man, finds only its natural completion in the theory that the same law of truth and righteousness governs the external as well as the internal world.

The Mīmāṁsā school dispensed with God as the creator and ruler of the universe, but developed an exclusive faith in the performance of the Vedic rites and rituals as means of overcoming the earthly evils and enjoying a blissful existence in heaven hereafter. It came to hold the theory of *apūrva*, according to which an action performed generates an imperceptible potency in the soul for future enjoyment or suffering according to the merit of the action, and by an inexorable law this potency bears actual fruit in future. This belief was justified by the general belief that the constitution of the world is moral and helps, therefore, the attainment of one's deserts.

The Vaiśeṣika school made one of the earliest attempts to explain the world in a naturalistic way. The physical world, ac-

cording to it, is a combination of five elements: ether, air, fire, water, and earth. The first one is an indivisible, continuous, and all-pervasive substance. But the other four have atoms of their own. The combination of these atoms gives rise to the composite material bodies forming the animal organisms as well as their environment. But the first movement in atoms is caused by an invisible principle (*adṛṣṭa*), which leads to the formation of natural objects that subserve the purpose of the individuals who are born into the world. This natural principle of *adṛṣṭa* functions automatically without any conscious administrator like God. But yet it is believed to cause every individual just the pleasure and pain which his past merit (*puṇya*) and demerit (*pāpa*) respectively entitle him to. Every change in nature that affects a soul favourably or unfavourably is believed to be conditioned by *adṛṣṭa*. The atomism of the Vaiśeṣikas is, therefore, only apparently naturalistic. It is governed by a moral outlook. The later syncretic school of Nyāya-vaiśeṣika develops this underlying tendency into a frank theism that makes this principle merely a law in the hands of God, the creator and the moral administrator of the world. The law of *adṛṣṭa* changes them from a law of nature into a divine law of justice which rules over the atoms and the elements of nature and makes them subserve the moral needs of individuals.

The Sāṅkhya school does not believe in God. It admits a plurality of souls along with an unconscious nature (*prakṛti*) which is the material cause of the objective world. The souls are changeless and inactive. The objects of the world spontaneously evolve out of nature without any conscious guidance. This is apparently a purely naturalistic view. But it is not really so in any of the meanings of naturalism as understood in Western philosophy. For even here the evolution of natural objects is said to be for the spirit. The Sāṅkhya, as well as other Indian schools, believes, like some Greek thinkers, that the world has no absolute beginning in time. There are beginningless cycles of evolution and dissolution. The present world follows a period of dissolution which ended the world just preceding it. The rebuilding of the present world out of the dissolved elements is not a mere blind accident. The souls that lived in the past world and acquired strong attachment for its objects retained their

inclination toward objects even in the state of dissolution when they were deprived of their gross bodies and the objects of enjoyment. Besides, these imperfect spirits, fettered to the objective world by their attachment, required also to be free, and freedom could be obtained only by their being associated once more with objects so that they could carefully scrutinize the real nature of the objects and know thereby that the soul is altogether different from objects and, therefore, does not need the objects at all. The evolution of the world of objects is initiated by the soul's double need of enjoyment and freedom (or moral perfection). Nature evolves gradually the mind, the senses, the motor organs, the gross body and other objects, and supplies to each imperfect spirit the instruments of knowledge and action, the body and the environment, that are justly deserved by it in accordance with the moral worth it attained in the previous world. Nature is guided, therefore, even here, by a moral principle which is inherent in it. The unconscious teleology of nature was conceivable to the Sãnkhya thinker because the atmosphere of his thought was dominated by the implicit faith that nature is guided by moral ends. Even the opposition between spirit and nature which is the outstanding theme of this school could not displace altogether this dominating burden of Indian thought, and the Sãnkhya naturalism remained ethical at the core.

In spite of the fact that it denied the authority of the Vedas, the existence of God, soul, and all permanent realities, even Buddhism accepted this outlook on nature. In place of the supreme Deity, it installed the moral law (*dharma*) and made the region of this law absolute. The succession of momentary states comprising life, the combination of momentary elements in the body and its environment—birth, death, rebirth, and emancipation on the stage of nature—were all governed by the moral law which preserved the merits and demerits of the past and endowed efforts with adequate results.

The Jainas, who also share the atheism of the Buddhists, believe equally in the law of *karma*. Therefore, though they hold the atomistic theory of nature, they look upon nature as a world of spiritual ends. Space, time, atoms, force, and resistance are the non-spiritual substances that constitute nature. All these

co-operate to supply spirits with the bodies, instruments, and environment necessary for them and deserved by them. The substance that conditions movement of atoms as well as of souls is *dharma*—a name which generally stands for the moral law or merit—while its opposite, namely, *adharma*, is conceived as the substance which conditions rest. *Karma* is also made more concrete, being conceived as a kind of material dirt that clings to the soul which becomes sticky with passions.

It may be concluded from the above statements that thoroughgoing naturalism never flourished in any of the systematized schools of Indian philosophy. The conception that nature, even if possessing a distinct existence, subserves the moral needs of spirits by bringing about events according to deserts was never rejected. It is still the unsuspecting philosophy of the Indian masses. It is interesting to mention that when the great earthquake of 1934 desolated vast tracts of land in Behar (India), Mr Gandhi instinctively declared that it was a divine visitation for some common sin of the sufferers. Mr Tagore emphatically opposed the idea and held that nature was guided by laws heedless of the morality and the immorality of man. Apart from the correctness of the opinion, Tagore's was the view of an Indian with the modern scientific outlook, whereas Gandhi's was the age-long, implicit faith of India. And it is more than a mere chance coincidence to discover that centuries ago an exponent of Indian atomism cited "earthquake" as an illustration of the work of the moral law of *adṛṣṭa* in nature.

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From Inter-Personal to International Morality

I. Evolution of Personal and Social Morality—Its Survival Value

If we compare the religions of different countries and ages, we find that they widely differ in respect of dogmas, rituals and beliefs in supernatural entities. But, if we compare the moral notions of different peoples and ages, we are struck by the great similarity in respect of the appreciation of certain basic ethical virtues, such as love for fellow-beings (and its derivatives like charity, kindness, sacrifice, etc.), truthfulness (and its derivatives like sincerity, honesty, non-deception), non-selfishness (and its derivatives like non-egotism, greedlessness, humility, etc.), self-control, non-stealing (not to misappropriate another's possession), courage, diligence and the like. Such virtues have always been encouraged in practical dealings among, at least, members of the same group, community or country. The rightness of the practice of these and allied virtues has been rarely questioned by the unsophisticated members, even though they might have fallen short of their ideals in practice. These virtues are among the self-evident values which form the core of the social structure and behaviour. All religious teachers worthy of the name have encouraged them, and some religions like Buddhism, Confucianism and Jainism have chiefly consisted in the cultivation of these moral virtues. In more recent times even a devoutly religious person like Mahatma Gandhi has gone to the extent of saying that the essence of religion is morality.

What is the source of this great ethical unanimity among different peoples ? Moral philosophers would differ on this point. Some would say that all men have reason which inclines them towards virtues by controlling bad propensities. Others would suggest that all men have got a common faculty, called conscience or moral sense, which can intuitively discern what is right. Some, again, would say that moral principles are the results of long human experience and they have survived

because they were repeatedly found to be useful under different circumstances.

I suppose there is some truth in each of these contentions, and we can understand each of them in its proper perspective, if we look at morality in a very naturalistic way as suggested by the evolutionist's reply given above, and try to realize the scientific concept of human evolution much more vividly and seriously than is usually done. We are told that man has existed, in some form or other, for at least two million years. If we place this vast period of two million years of human evolution at the background of the barely five or six thousand years of known history, we should be able to realize that man must have learnt how to behave, not only during the short period about which history tells us, but very probably much more also during the millenniums which preceded it. It is only very reasonable, then, to believe that man learnt the utility of living a corporate, social life, that he learnt the value of the moral principles and virtues like love of fellow-beings, truthfulness, self-control, etc., for without these society is bound to decay and perish. It is quite probable that reason was also used to support and encourage the formation of such character traits among members. Reason must have been used to justify, for example, virtues in the light of their consequences, just as a few years ago it was necessary to use reasoning for convincing one of the utility of vitamins and vitaminous foods. But just as within a very short time an adult of an advanced modern society learns to take vitamins tacitly as self-evident values, similarly, moral virtues which had been found repeatedly useful for millenniums have now also become, very naturally, transparent and self-evident values. They have become ingrained in the very atmosphere and constitution of human society, so that an adult who has been raised in it, appreciates these values directly or intuitively without the help of reasoning. What is usually called conscience or moral sense would thus seem to be nothing but this intuitive power of judgment, which must have a long long history behind its evolution. It is natural that some immature or sceptical members of society, who are unaware of the million years of human experience that lay behind the evolution of moral values, should doubt

their worth, and should want fresh reasons for their acceptance and even revolt against them. Reason and experience can remove such scepticism. Reason can show the relation of a value in question to other values accepted even by the sceptical inquirer and can cite instances of consequences following from the acceptance, as well as non-acceptance, of the value—much in the same way as a child has to be convinced even now about the utility of vitaminous foods.

It is seen then that the basic moral values like love of fellow-beings, truthfulness, etc., which are common to different human societies, have the sanction and support of long human experience, reason and intuition. They are indispensable for corporate life. So, wherever such life has grown and flourished, their presence can be discovered. No individual or section of society can disregard these basic moral values for a long time with impunity. Neglect of truthfulness, for example, begets distrust, and deception cannot go on for a long time. A person who is given to falsehood has to correct himself, because if words, which are the relating bonds between one human being and another, cease to discharge their intended function of conveying ideas and generating beliefs, the liar would be utterly cut off from his fellow-beings and automatically excommunicated. Similarly, a person who hates other fellows instead of loving them, or who has no control over his passions. would come to grief.

It should be noted that violation of the basic moral principles that we may ordinarily find in any society becomes possible because there is violation only to a limited extent, only in some cases, sometimes, and within certain limits. Like adulteration in food, vices work only when mixed with, and concealed under, virtues. As Mahatma Gandhi used to say humorously : Falsehood has no legs of its own to stand upon; because, it can pass only under the guise of truth. Vices have, therefore, no survival value which is really possessed by virtues. It is natural, therefore, that the survival and prosperity of a society largely depends upon the extent to which its members obey the basic moral principles.

As the moral qualities, necessary for individuals for the formation of a progressive society, are those that make success-

ful corporate existence possible, they are necessary for any corporate human group, small or large. For example, the smallest primary unit, called a family, demands, for its happy and prosperous existence, that the members should have mutual love, should be truthful, should control selfishness, greed and violent passions, etc., and should work for the good of the family. In fact, as the family is a more compact, better defined and concrete corporate unit than society, it is much easier to detect here the close interrelation between moral virtues and happiness, and between vices and unhappiness. Moreover, as there is greater natural love between the members of a family than between members of bigger groups, and as most of the virtues follow easily from love, the moral ideals are more easily realizable in the family than in bigger groups. So the family is taken as the ideal for all bigger human organizations like club, college, university, church, village, province, country and nation. Members of such groups are asked, for example, to realize the ideal of brotherhood or sisterhood; leaders are expected to exercise their authority like a dutiful yet loving father, and serve the people like a selfless, tender-hearted mother.

Of these larger human groups, the nation is the most important one and it demands special attention for our present purpose. It is more concrete and better-defined than a society. The chief factors which contribute to the unity of a nation are a common country with definite boundaries, common traditions, a common political and economic organization, and very often a common language and literature and sometimes a common religion too. These diverse common interests tend to unite the members into a closely-knit unit, with the progress and welfare of which those of the members are inseparably connected. Consequently, the members are required to follow the moral rules which, we saw, are necessary for the well-being of any kind of corporate life. The histories of different nations show how moral vices like mutual hatred, deception, dishonesty, self-indulgence, laziness, cowardice, etc., create internal disorder and other weaknesses that undermine the nation's power to resist foreign attack and, ultimately, lead to the nation's downfall. The close relation of a nation's moral

virtues and vices with its progress and decay become more evident if, without being misled by the immediate results of a nation's behaviour, we carefully take a long-range view, just as the great historians of the world, like H. G. Wells and Arnold Toynbee, have done.

II. The Evolution of Modern International Consciousness—Its Great Moral Opportunities

The basic moral principles which have served men well so long in the formation and healthy functioning of corporate life in its different forms, such as, family, society and nation, can be reasonably expected to do well also for the formation of any international organization on a human or global scale. But, before discussing this point, we should briefly dwell on the present international consciousness and the great moral opportunities that the present situation offers.

The rapid development of science, technology, industrialization, means of quick transportation and communication, international trade, colonization, and the consequent conflict of interests between nations, between workers and capitalists of the world, the two great world wars, and lastly the present, protracted world-wide tension with its race for the invention of lethal weapons capable of wholesale human destruction in the minimum of time—all these have occurred successively within the very short period of the last two hundred years of man's history. They have brought countries together and generated a consciousness of common interests and destiny, a common threat to human existence, as also its alternative—the possibility of a common human prosperity by mutual understanding and co-operation.

This global consciousness has arisen very recently, rather by a sudden rude shock which has dislocated the normal easy tempo of life even in the most primitive and isolated countries. The important thing to note here is that never before within the thousands of years of recorded history did people in all parts of the world ever attain such a concrete and vivid consciousness of the indivisible co-existence of the human race—the fact that no nation, howsoever isolated by natural barriers, can any longer

lead an isolated existence enjoying its own peace and prosperity, or even its own self-complacent ignorance, poverty and lethargy. The whole world is caught up in mutual fear and consternation at the terrible possibilities of the effect of man's immoral tendencies on man's developed intellect. Never before, therefore, has there been such a universal hankering for peace. It is a grand achievement of human evolution whose great potentiality should counterbalance our pessimism about the present.

If we dispassionately view again the recorded history of the human world, we would find that through the long travail of innumerable migrations, expeditions, invasions, wars, revolutions and the consequent mixing of races and cultures and the destruction and reconstruction of cities, empires and civilizations, mankind has become gradually organized today into a much smaller number of large and well-knit corporate units which can be called nations, though the total number of men in the world has always been increasing by leaps and bounds. For example, each of the European nations, like the British, the French, the Germans, the Italians, the Russians, and the Americans, has evolved through centuries of vicissitudes and by the integration of different stocks, races, cultures and territories. Moreover, these nations are mostly organized on a democratic basis with recognized and accepted leaders and representatives.

The great advantange of this present situation for the attainment of real international understanding and organization on a global scale is that you have to confer with a comparatively much smaller and manageable number of units and persons. It has been much easier, for example, to arrive at a democratic decision regarding the world today than it would have been regarding even one country like India, which was at one time divided into scores of separate units, all of which would have to be consulted for any settlement to be reached. Moreover, unlike the large empires of the past which were acquired and held together by force more than any other principle, the nations of today are more stable, democratic and unified organizations on which the larger world-organizations can be more securely based. It would appear, therefore, from all these, that the world was never so ready for any real

international understanding on a stable moral basis as today.

III. The Necessity of the Inter-personal Morals in International Dealings

We may return now to the fuller consideration of the contention that the basic moral principles underlying a happy family (society or nation) should also be the fundamental principles for the organization of international life. It will be helpful to call to mind from past history how the neglect or violation of the cardinal moral laws has been responsible for the endless unhappy and unstable relations among countries and nations, stories of which fill the pages of history. Quarrels and wars between countries have always been caused by the same immoral tendencies as spoil cordial relations between individuals, namely, by hatred, greed, selfishness, pride, deception, treachery and the like. Combinations of two or more countries have, of course, taken place very often. But even they have been often spoiled because of being inspired, not by mutual love, but by a common greed and hatred and common designs against other countries intended to be jointly exploited, plundered or subjugated by force and threat. Diplomatic relations and treaties have also been based mostly on such base immoral motives and camouflaged by false or insincere pledges and ambiguous words, so much so that diplomacy itself has become a term of reproach. Naturally enough, such immoral partnerships have always dissolved with the slightest change of selfish interests, and the allies of yesterday have often become the bitterest enemies of today. Treaties have often become mere scraps of paper. Even the League of Nations fell down like a house of cards, because, as H. G. Wells points out, it was really a league of victors designed to keep down the conquered. It never enjoyed the moral support of even the major nations.

The chief danger to the stability of the present U.N.O., which is a great improvement upon the League, lies also in the fact that its moral *bona fides*—its peaceful and unselfish intentions and its sincerity— are often doubted. The futility and danger of the use of violent means for enforcing peace even by the united efforts of nations, have been made plain by the recent

happenings in Korea. China, which was equipped and trained earlier by the U.S.A. in the art of modern warfare and which has come back now like a boomerang on the benefactors themselves, has clearly shown, at least to those who have not been blinded by anger and pride, how dangerous it is to teach violence and distribute arms to the unarmed, even out of the eagerness to resist violence or to found peace.

In short, then, we find ample evidence in past and recent history to show how necessary it has become to recognize that no real understanding can be reached, and no stable friendly relation between nations can be established, without practising in the international sphere the same moral principles as are employed in dealing with the members of a family or of a nation. Brotherly love (non-violence), truthfulness, non-stealing (non-appropriation and non-exploitation), self-discipline (control of pride, etc.), control of greed or selfishness and what other duties and virtues follow from them are indispensable for happy and cordial relations as much between any two nations, as among all nations of the world. It is heartening, however, to find that though efforts for international understanding have begun only in recent times, yet successive failures have been guiding the united promoters of peace towards greater and greater moral unity.

Perfection can only be gradually approached. Even in the humbler sphere of family relations the moral ideals are only partially realized, and though we speak of parental care and affection, brotherly or sisterly love, filial piety, it is hard to get an ideally perfect parent, brother, sister or child anywhere. But still a moral ideal, like a geometrical circle, is necessary and beneficial, because it always points to the direction in which our efforts can be made to ensure increasing, though not complete, perfection, and its beneficial results. Here, as elsewhere, the making of a full effort is the best we can and ought to do.

IV. The Practical Difficulties of International Morality

It is necessary to consider in this connection some of the chief difficulties that stand in the way of the realization of

moral ideals in international relations.

The first obstacle in the way of moral life, in every sphere, smaller or wider, is ignorance—ajñāna, as Indian philosophers would say. In the international sphere what retard better understanding and cordiality are: ignorance about the history, culture and real conditions of one's own country, as also of other countries; ignorance about the relation of interdependence among the different countries of the world, in respect of material prosperity, safety and peace; and ignorance, above all, of the higher truths and values for the discovery, appreciation and enjoyment of which the best achievements and the best talents of all peoples can be pooled together to the best advantage of all.

Treading close behind ignorance and superstitions are the emotional attitudes of apathy, antipathy and superciliousness towards the peoples and cultures of other countries. These may be regarded as the next great obstacle which is the direct, but crystallized, effect of the first. Knowledge can dissipate ignorance, and continued use of correct knowledge alone can replace the fixed wrong attitudes (*saṁskāras*, as Indians would say) by correct and friendly ones. Dissemination of correct information about the best achievements of each people, is one of the best means of creating appreciative interest in other peoples. There is no country or nation in the world which has not achieved some excellence, at present or in the past, in art or sculpture or music or dance or religion or moral behaviour or theoretical knowledge, worthy of admiration. If we approach humanity with a little reverence and humility, we cannot fail to feel delight and pride in the diverse ways and forms in which the members of our race have expressed themselves and reacted to different conditions through which they had to pass in order to survive. If, on the other hand, we search for the darker sides, there would be no country or people there (including the most advanced ones) which could not be shown to possess evils, vices and imperfections worthy of contempt. Unfortunately, it is the latter attitude which has been much more common. Most inquirers about other peoples have studied them with the motive of showing the inferiority of other peoples' religions, morals, politics or

cultures, to show thereby the superiority of their own, and making out a justification for religious proselytization, cultural pride or domination, economic exploitation, or political hostility and conquest.

As between two individuals, more so between two nations, friendly understanding can develop only by mutual respect and humility, a willingness to appreciate the virtues in the other party disregarding the weak points. The vices of others should primarily serve as warning to ourselves. It is only by our higher example that we can reform others most effectively. Criticism of others' defects only serves to create bitterness, and makes them adhere to the faults more obstinately.

Paradoxical as it may sound, the basic truth is that without an initial capital of goodwill we cannot increase goodwill. This initial capital can arise only if there is the respect for man as such. This finds expression in Western Philosophy—particularly in Kant—in the form of a maxim: "So act as to treat humanity, whether in thine own person or in that of any other, in every case as an end withal, never as means only."[1] In Indian culture it appears under a wider form in the concept of *Ahiṁsā*—which means regard for every life. It generates the attitude of harmlessness and friendliness (*maitrī*), kindness (*karuṇā*), joy (*muditā*) at others' well-being, and forgiveness (*upekṣā*) in respect of others' faults. A cordial attitude purifies the heart and promotes morality in inter-personal as well as international dealings.

Unless every human community or nation comes to be regarded as an end rather than as a means to ulterior selfish ends, no sincere and moral behaviour towards other nations is possible. Respect for other persons or nations may be rooted in, or supported by, different kinds of philosophical conceptions of man. In Christianity and other theistic faiths (including some Indian ones), all men are regarded as brothers, the children of one heavenly father. In Advaita Vedānta, all men are but the finite manifestations of the same fundamental Reality, Brahman. According to some naturalists, again, respect for and faith in man are justified, if not

1. Theory of Ethics in Scribner's *Selections from Kant*, p. 309.

by man's real or inherent goodness, yet at least by the potentiality which man, irrespective of race and country, possesses for developing the finest qualities under proper nurture and friendly encouragement.

Whatever be the underlying philosophy, the sincere attitude of respect, faith and love in all practical dealings with other persons and nations always evoke similar behaviour on the other side.

Practice of the moral virtues, like kindness, truthfulness, non-deception, non-exploitation, greedlessness, control of the baser passions, flow spontaneously from this friendly attitude of respect and love. So the wise men of ancient India regarded *Ahiṁsā* as the supreme virtue (*paramo dharmaḥ*). It is really the parent of all virtues. This truth is the well-known philosophical basis of the Gandhian way, in personal, social, as well as political spheres. It has been tried fruitfully, but only to a limited extent, in India. It has immense possibilities which can be utilized everywhere and particularly in international relations. It is fundamentally at one with real democratic spirit which can flourish only on respect for every person, and on faith in the individual's capacity for realizing the highest values under proper nurture.

But as the higher path is always the harder path, the practice of this high philosophy of love and respect has to face some very difficult problems. It is much easier to lead some people and combine some nations by rousing and organizing their common passions—hatred, revenge, greed, fear, religious fanaticism and the like. The path of non-violence needs leaders who have themselves a strong moral character, extreme patience and self-control, and who can rouse, by their own steadfast faith, the love of higher values lying dormant in the peoples. *The dearth of moral leaders is a great obstacle to real international understanding.* Not to speak of the totalitarian and autocratic countries where individuals are being used as mere tools, even the most advanced democracies are being swayed by leaders who only rouse, voice and organize the lower impulses of their peoples, losing sight of their higher potentialities and dormant spiritual aspirations.

Among other great problems that arise on the higher

moral path of international relations are the demand for *equality* and *conflict of duties*. They spring from the same source and are intimately connected. Awakening of the feelings of love and respect for all men rouses in our consciousness the moral demand for treating all with equal regard—the demand for *sama-darśana*, as Indian saints call it. But in spite of the best will, human powers and resources are limited. These limiting conditions constrain us, in family life as well as in social and international affairs, to choose only *some* persons, communities and nations, and again *some* aspects of their needs, out of the possible many, for our dutiful attention and benevolent service. Conflict of duties is thus the inevitable result of the human limitations, which prevent us from doing all kinds of duties to all, and compel us to choose some and omit others. Kant wisely pointed out that "ought" implied "can". The contrapositive of this truth must also be true, namely: What we *cannot* possibly do (e.g., doing all good things for all persons) *should not* be regarded as a thing we ought to do. In simple language, we ought not to be bothered by the sense of omission of duty in respect of persons and things lying beyond our limited capacities.

The real problem, however, is: How should we choose out of the many, the few that we can serve ? Whom and what should we choose ? And what should we omit ? What should be the principle here for guiding our moral choice ?

For an answer, let us look into this problem as it arises within the smaller sphere of family life, which we have accepted as the best available example, which we can follow for the establishment of cordial international relations. The ideal mother, in spite of her equal love for all children, has to divide her limited time, attention, and other resources among them, not equally and in the same way, but in accordance with the respective needs of the baby, the grown-up, and the sick. The principles underlying her action are *equity* and *urgency*, rather than equality. The helpless and the sick get her attention even at the expense of others, if there is not enough to take care of the needs of all. In a similar manner, the nation or state should treat its constituent groups and communities and world organizations should serve different nations, in

accordance with their respective needs, and on the principles of equity and urgency. *As in the family so also in the larger* organizations, moral humane considerations demand greater care, attention and expenditure for the helpless, handicapped and backward members. The principle of equality, if literally taken (i.e., that all members should be given equal shares of the total resources), would be found to be less than humane, as it would not justify the special care of the hapless members. The principle has to be interpreted here as that which demands that the unfortunate members should be given additional attention in order that they may be brought up, as near as possible, to the average level, to be able to enjoy opportunities that others already enjoy without special aid. Equality takes, therefore, the form of equity, benevolence, humaneness and a consequent sense of urgency calling for special care of the needy.

There is another slightly different situation which also poses problems for the principle of equality, and causes conflicts of duties. If every nation is morally bound to treat all other nations fraternally, should not all its resources be thrown open to them without any discrimination: (i) between its own interests and the interests of others, and (ii) between one foreign nation and another? Regarding the first part of the question, it should be said that the principle of equal treatment by any nation presupposes that the nation in question must first of all exist, and, therefore, must have a reasonable minimum of resources for supporting itself, before it can feel any obligation towards others—just as an individual can think of his obligations to others only when his own preservation has been taken care of. So long as nations of the world have to support themselves separately, *the principle of self-preservation will limit the practice of the ideal of equality.* If free trade threatens, for example, the very economic existence of the nation, it cannot be allowed, until one common economic organization of all nations has evolved. Charity begins at home. But it should not, of course, end there. *After the home has been* reasonably provided for, attention should fraternally find its way *out to other nations and countries.*

Just here arises the second part of the question noted

above. When a nation is in a position to attend to the needs of other nations, should all these latter be treated equally? A little reflection should show that the highest ideal of completely equal treatment towards all men can be only gradually approached by individuals, as well as by nations, through progressive steps starting realistically from where they stand now, and following the widening path of natural love. Every step forward will be a lesson in greater altruism and sacrifice, widening the orbit of natural love which starts with the next of kin and spreads towards all men. A nation or people has natural love for another possessed of geographical contiguity, or cultural, religious, linguistic, ideological or even racial affinity. The greater these points of affinity the greater would be the possibility of natural love, which can be morally cultivated and utilized for developing fraternal cordiality which makes the performance of moral duties a pleasure.

It should be observed that such alliances among different human groups on the basis of natural affinities are not necessarily antagonistic to the development of international amity and integrity. They are bad only when they are based on common enmity and design against other groups, but not when they are based on the positive factor of natural love. Even within the members of a large family, there are different degrees of intimacy and intensity of affection. But these differences do not disturb the unity of the family. On the contrary, a deeper affection between two brothers, two sisters, or between a parent and a child adds to the richer harmony of the family—provided, again, of course, that affection does not encourage selfishness or hatred against others. Natural love fertilizes moral virtues only when it is chastened by reason and prevented from degenerating into blind and selfish attraction. As in the case of individuals, so also in the case of nations, reason educates natural love to appreciate and foster the larger interests of humanity and the higher values, the realization of which is the destiny of man. The different human organizations—society, state, nation and humanity at large, or the comity of all nations—are only the means for the gradual fulfilment of that higher destiny of the individual. They are the stages for the expansion of the self of the individual through the

widening processes of love and sacrifice. An individual, who has been able to identify himself with the interests of the nation, is certainly superior to one whose interests do not extend beyond the family. But even nationalism is an obstacle to the moral and spiritual progress of the individual, if it does not naturally tend towards internationalism or humanism. And even humanism, let us add, fails of its higher destiny if it does not mature into love of all beings. At every stage on the moral and spiritual path there is the danger of stagnation. "Good" should not be allowed to become the enemy of the "better". This danger is overcome if all human endeavours are inspired by a moral enthusiasm for the *attainment of the highest perfection the individual is capable of*, so that no impure and immoral means is adopted at any stage, no stagnation is allowed, and there is at least an unceasing attitude of goodwill to all fellow-beings notwithstanding our practical limitations.

Conclusion

To sum up the main points of the paper, morality is the product of a long process of human evolution lasting over a million years and possesses survival value. No corporate life—society, nation or federation of nations—can last and flourish without moral virtues, such as love of fellow-beings, non-violence, non-deception, non-appropriation, non-attachment and self-control. Therefore, international relations should be based on the same moral principles as apply to good inter-personal relations, the best available example of which we find in an ideal family. There are many difficulties which stand in the way of the practice of such ideals. But there is no cause for pessimism. The over-all human situation today is much more favourable for the practice of international morality than it was ever before. A strong moral will and faith in the high moral and spiritual potentialities of man, can overcome these obstacles gradually, but progressively. To make this moral effort is all that is given to us, and, as Mahatma Gandhi used to say: "Full effort is full victory."

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3

SOCIETY AND CULTURE

The Philosophical Basis of Social Revolution

I

Before we discuss the philosophic basis of social revolution, it will be helpful to consider briefly the wider question, namely, how philosophy is related to social organization in general. For, it may be thought by many that even human society, like the societies of bees, ants, elephants and other gregarious animals, grows and changes unconsciously, and the societal structure is the result of blind physical, biological and economic forces, rather than of conscious planning based on any social philosophy. Though the contention is largely true, there are important exceptions which will largely concern us here.

If philosophy is taken in the wider sense of a pattern of beliefs and attitudes towards the problems of life and the world, then it is possible to trace different kinds of inarticulate philosophies behind different patterns of social attitudes and behaviours. These unwritten philosophies are none the less very active forces lying at the root of society. It is these which often manifest themselves into well-argued systems of thought when they are challenged, confronted and criticized on the conscious level. When social philosophy, in the stricter sense, is thus developed, it becomes a strong force capable of producing enormous changes in society.

Whatever might have been true of the past, modern human society is forced, by the stress of complicated circumstances and constant criticism, to shape itself with careful deliberation and farsighted plans, in respect of its economic and political structure, its family units, its total population, international policies, etc. One of the bases of such sound planning must be a sound philosophy of man and values. Man has so often been deceived in recent times in different lands by political saviours with promises of 'Aryans' Paradise', 'Lebensraum', 'Classless Society', 'Pure Land' and the like, that he cannot afford to assent blindly to any social plan without examining

closely its rational basis, the philosophy behind it. He must know whether he will be regarded as a tool, a mere means to the society's ends, or as an end, as a centre of values for the realization of which he will have the necessary freedom and opportunity. He must know whether man is considered, in that social structure, a mere Pavlovian animal fit to be conditioned, reconditioned and regimented in accordance with the scheme of the dictators, or regarded as also a spiritual being having his own inner potentiality capable of free development. He must know whether man is regarded as a naturally pugnacious and self-centred being unworthy of trust and respect, or whether he is recognised to possess an inherent goodness and love for fellow beings as well. Above all he must understand the moral basis of the social scheme, and the values it aims at—whether that scheme is based on narrow class-interest, and hatred and prejudice against other groups, or on a wider human outlook, and whether it aims at only the maximum production and consumption of material goods, or treats these as a means to higher values. It is found thus that sound social planning must have, among other things, a sound social philosophy as its basis.

The philosophy of a human group, of a particular age and country, is reflected in some basic categories expressed in words which guide social thought, judgment and emotions, and thereby social activity. A comparative study of the different sets of key categories that consciously guide different societies will yield very instructive and interesting knowledge about the inner dynamics of social life. Just consider, for a rough illustration, the following sets:—(1) God, man, sin, hell, saviour, faith, hope, love, charity, thrift, redemption, heaven. (2) Matter, nature, dialectic, man, class-struggle, labour, capital, bourgeois, capitalist, proletariat, dictatorship, production, purge, classless society, withering of the state. (3) Brahman, ātman, ajñāna, āsakti, adharma, karma, bandhana, duḥkha, jñāna, dharma, niṣkāma-karma, mokṣa, ānanda. (4) T'ien (Heaven), Ming (Will of Heaven), Tao (The Way), Yang yin (*Activity-Passivity*), *Li* (*proper conduct*), *Hsiao* (filial piety), Jen (human-heartedness), Ch'eng (realization). (5) Democracy, freedom, defence, economic development,

total employment, production, consumption, standard of living, amenities, 'our heritage', 'our posterity'.

It will be readily seen that each of these sets of categorial words listed by us roughly defines the philosophical outlook of a distinct group which you can even identify with its help. You can find out through each of these what Karl Marx[1] calls the 'ideology' of the people, and also what social philosophers call the 'ethos' and 'mores' of a people. Even these disconnected category-symbols, charged with suggestions of positive and negative values, arouse emotions and ideas, and move men to action. Indeed, one of the notable things about the philosophical writings of China is that they contain just the lists of ideograms, the disconnected pictures of ideas. And yet their influence is untold. As Professor Fung Yu Lan observes: "The sayings and writings of the Chinese philosophers are so inarticulate that their suggestiveness is almost boundless."[2]

The social categories evolve out of a common social atmosphere of ideas, beliefs, emotions and needs, sometimes through common, informal discussion, and sometimes through rigorous and formal, scientific and philosophical thinking. They are used and tried in daily life, and those that survive and are accepted, gradually become part of the unchallenged, self-luminous categories and values that form the basic mental dynamism of the society, or what may be regarded, from another point of view, as the mental component of the culture of the society, or described in Indian terms as the saṁskāras (or the saṁskṛti) of the society. It forms the stock-in-trade of the social mind, along the fixed groove of which ideas move, in the light of which new ideas are judged and tested. Wartime propaganda, peace-time planning, appeals of social leaders, are all based on the accepted set of categories. Understanding between any two or more groups is effected by emphasis on the categories common to them, and conflicts are generated by emphasis on categories in which they differ.

No fundamental change in any society can be brought about without a change in its basic categories, or at least without

1. *Vide* J. A. Leighton, *Social Philosophies in Conflict* (Appleton), Chapts. 18-20
2. Fung Yu Lan, *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy*, p. 12 (Macmillan, 1948).

a great change of emphasis on the existing set. Old categories are sometimes consciously rejected, and sometimes they unconsciously fade out of use. If we glance back at the five lists of key categories previously given by us, we shall see that set No. 1 which used to be the common mental stock of the Christian West has been consciously rejected by the Communist West in favour of set No. 2, whereas it is tending to be replaced by set No. 5 in the Anglo-American world through a repeated change of emphasis on the latter. We do not yet know how far the basic mental culture of China has changed; but apparently it has recently replaced its traditional set, No. 4, by the communist set. India presents the picture of a split personality. Its time-honoured and time-worn set, No. 3, has been strengthened, re-interpreted and revived into active operation by the greatest social leaders of recent times, but the impact of the West has been strongly attracting it towards No. 5, sometimes also to some categories of set No. 2, e.g. "classless society".

One of the most important tasks of philosophy as a rational discipline is an examination of all current categories, their rational bases, their internal consistency and mutual compatibilities, and their implications. If it is recognized that human society can no longer be based on blind passions, prejudices and physical force, then such a rational process has also to be recognized as indispensable. Fortunately, this truth is being more and more accepted to-day.

An effective philosophy which shows the weakness, inadequacy and incompatibility of existing categories, lays the rational foundation of desirable social changes. But to make it socially acceptable, a philosopher has to earn the right to be listened to, as Janaka, Confucius, Buddha, Socrates and others did with their own lives dedicated to the cause of truth.

II

In the light of the fore-going discussion, we can investigate now the philosophic basis of social revolution, that is to say, how and how far philosophy can be the cause or support of any revolutionary change in society—economic, political,

cultural, structural, or of any other kind. For the sake of precision it will be good to start with some fairly accepted definition of revolution. In the *Dictionary of Sociology* it is defined as: "A sweeping, sudden change in the societal structure or in some important feature of it. A form of social change distinguished by its scope and speed. It may or may not be accomplished by violence....The essence of revolution is the sudden change, not the violent upheaval."[3] Social revolution is more explicitly described as: "The *sudden* passing of a social order, especially its social hierarchy. A social revolution is a thoroughgoing revamping of the constellations of power, prestige, and privilege in a society."[4]

Accepting this meaning of revolution provisionally, we find that the important elements in the concept of revolutionary change are its suddenness and its thoroughgoing character, not necessarily its violent nature. Revolution as a *sudden* change can be, and often has been, brought about in the political sphere by sheer brute force. Sudden changes can also be made in other spheres of society by State legislation. There have recently been such legal attempts in India for the abolition of child marriage, caste discrimination, landlordism, etc. But experience tells us that such sudden changes externally imposed do neither last, nor serve their real objects, unless the social mind is prepared and changed. It will be all the more true if revolution means a *thoroughgoing* change. For, such a change can never be achieved without an effective policy that can appeal to reason and accepted values, change the heart, generate abiding sentiments, sustain all-round enthusiasm and call forth moral support.

This position may be unacceptable to some followers of Marx and Engels since these thinkers have advocated the view that the entire culture of a society, including its philosophy, is the product of the prevalent economic system,[5] of which revolution is another effect. The proletarian revolution, for example, is produced by the dialectic "bursting asunder" of the capitalist system whereby "the expropriators

3. *Dictionary of Sociology* (Library of Phil., 1944).
4. *Ibid.* (Our Italics).
5. *Vide German Ideology*, pp. 13-14 (Lawrence and Wishart).

are expropriated."[6] So it would seem to follow that philosophy and revolution are only the co-effects of a particular economic system; philosophy cannot be thought to be the basis—a causal condition or a supporting antecedent—of revolution.

The answer to such an objection can be found in the history of Marxism itself. If Marx's philosophy or ideology does not in any way cause or support revolution, then the careful process of indoctrination and the world-wide propagation of Marxist literature would be a meaningless futility. The more consistent view would seem to be that though philosophy may be partly caused by economic conditions, it becomes in turn the cause of new social, economic conditions. A more balanced Marxist view found in the *Soviet Philosophical Dictionary* under 'Ideology' is:—"Ideology comes into being as the reflection of material conditions of social life and of determinate class interests and has an active influence on the development of society. *Progressive ideology serves the interests of the revolutionary forces in society*....Ideology plays an enormous part in public life and in the history of society."[7] So philosophical treatises like the *Text Book of Marxism*, *Dictionary of Philosophy* (which rewrites the history of philosophy from Stalin's point of view) are circulated in millions of copies, to support the revolutionary outlook and check anti-revolutionary trends. Marxist philosophy is thus the best example that shows how a philosophy can become the basis—the cause and support—of a social revolution.

It is true that if suddenness be regarded as the main character of a revolution, philosophy cannot be regarded as its *immediate cause*. It takes a long time for a new philosophy to spread and grow and strike root. The rather slow process of a successful social philosophy is to analyse, examine, criticize, accept and refute an existing set of categories which lie deep-rooted in the social mind, and then to replace them by a new coherent system of concepts, supported by strong reasons and possessed of sufficient emotional appeal. The new categories of thought must be constantly used and instilled into the mind

6. *Capital*, p. 95 (Burman's abridged edition).
7. Extracts from the *Soviet Philosophical Dictionary*, p. 14 (Congress for Cultural Freedom, Paris).

of the people until they come to possess the mind as self-evident truths and obvious values about the desirability of which there cannot be any question. It is only then that the social mind is ready to take fire, burst or plunge ahead in precipitate action causing a revolution. The conflagration may take place suddenly, and an insignificant antecedent event may rightly claim to be the immediate causal condition, as having ignited the spark. But the spectacular immediate cause is insignificant in importance as compared with the underlying philosophy. Even the Marxist philosophy took at least fifty years to grow, mature and take practical shape through successive followers, but its importance as the basis of the communist revolution is never under-rated.

Revolution is often preceded by cultural crisis. The cause of such a crisis is well stated by Wilbur Urban, one of the founders of the modern philosophy of values, thus: "Culture has been described as 'the measure of things taken for granted.' When within a given culture things are no longer taken for granted, a crisis in culture ensues."[8] There may be several causes for doubting things previously taken for granted. For example, (a) contact with a foreign culture, (b) discovery of new truths, (c) the invention of new machines outmoding old ones or other causes altogether upsetting the old economic system, (d) the internal inconsistencies (e.g., between ideals and practices) and their self-destructive consequences, etc. Human nature is, however, conservative and a culture does not easily give way. In spite of conflict, a culture often tends to save itself by psycho-pathological devices like logic-tight compartments, distortion and rationalization, etc., as we have tried to show elsewhere.[9] A kind of social insanity results from this, as has happened in our country in consequence of the conflicts among Hindu, Muslim and Western cultures. Such a social condition may pave the way to drastic revolutionary changes, and sometimes bring about opposite kinds of evils. But a dispassionate philosophical study of the conflicting elements, assessment of their relative values in the light of the

8. Urban, Axiology, in *Twentieth Century Phil.*, p 69 (Phil. Lib., 1947).

9. 'Psychology of Culture Conflicts in the Light of the Psy. of Insanity'—paper for Indian Science Congress, 1947 (publ. *Ind. Jour. Psy.* and *Calcutta Review*).

acceptable ideals, and understanding of the desirable changes can supply the necessary basis of a sound revolution.

It was said previously that revolution means sweeping, thoroughgoing or extensive changes. But it should be pointed out that even a drastic revolution does not, and cannot, altogether break with the past. Every revolutionary philosophy considers some elements of the existing system of categories to be of fundamental value and importance, and uses them as the spring-board in order to discard elements not compatible with them. For example, Buddhism which revolted against the Brahminical society is found, on careful analysis, to have stood firm on the previous categories of karma, avidyā, duḥkha, bandhana, dharma, jñāna, mokṣa, etc., though these were re-interpreted and re-organized, and used for discarding castes, priests, gods, rituals and souls. Indeed, we find that while decrying the so-called Brahmins, Buddha depicts the ideal Brāhmaṇa in glowing terms.[10]

Similarly, while Marx is so critical of Hegel, he uses Hegel's dialectic and historical method as the corner-stone of his own system. As Lenin admits,[11] German Philosophy, English Political Economy and French Revolutionary Socialism were also utilized by Marx for building his system, though he was bitterly critical of these in many respects. The most instructive fact perhaps is that while Marx so vehemently denounces religion, he imbibed and transmitted into his revolutionary school some of the basic elements of the Judaic religion. Arnold Toynbee points out how Judaic ideas come back in secular disguise in Marxism, for example, "the chosen people" disguised as "the proletariat", "the gentiles" as the "bourgeoisie", "the apocalypse" as "communist revolution", "the millennium" as "the withering of the state."[12] It is found thus that though a revolution may outwardly look very extensive and thoroughgoing, it grows from some old roots though in new forms and directions.

10. *Dhammapada*, brāhmana-vaggo.

11 *The Teachings of Karl Marx*, p. 10.

12 *Hibbert Jour.*, July, 1954, p. 324.

III

So far we have discussed the different aspects of revolution in the light of the provisional definition which does not regard violence as a necessary element. But the word 'revolution' has been brought into frequent use, and made into a self-evident category of value by Communism, so much so that even Vinobaji adopts it and is eager to show that his land-gift movement is a revolution (*krānti*). I dare say that the choice of this subject for our symposium is also the result of the same pervasive influence. So it is very necessary that we should discuss the communist idea that violence is a necessary element of revolution.

The communist belief in the necessity of violence arises from two other more fundamental beliefs, namely, that man is a material, pugnacious being evolving through class-struggle, and that morality is a matter of convenience. Marx says, "*Force* is the midwife of *every* old society pregnant with a new one."[13] Marx, Engels and Lenin all try to inculcate the idea that there is nothing like a universal principle of morality valid for all men. Engels thinks that "morality was always class morality", a justification of the "interests of the ruling class. There is nothing like an eternal, immutable moral law."[14] Lenin pronounces more categorically, "We say that our morality is wholly subordinated to the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat. We deduce our morality from the fact and needs of the class struggle."[15] Such being the philosophy of man and morals, it is but natural that they should believe in physical force and violence, rather than in appeal to moral sense and reason. Marx declares, "Between equal rights force decides." In the *Communist Manifesto* he, naturally, advocates the "*forcible overthrow of all* existing social conditions".

We have discussed elsewhere the inherent contradictions of this philosophy.[16] We can only briefly mention here that if the object of any revolution be to restore the lost dignity of man, it cannot be based on the distrust of man's inherent worth and his

13. *Capital*, p. 75 (Our Ital.).
14. Engels, *Anti-Duhring*, p. 89.
15. Lenin, *Religion* (Burman), p 60
16. *The Chief Currents of Contemporary Philosophy*, Chap. on Marxism (Cal. Univ., 1961).

high moral and spiritual potentiality. To have a sincere regard for man is to have faith in his reason and love, and to desist from deceiving him, injuring him, coveting his things and treating him in any improper way. The basic moral principles of truthfulness, non-violence, non-selfishness, self-restraint, etc., logically follow from respect for man. They have stood the test of repeated experiments in the evolution of human society which is now believed to have existed over a million years. They are indispensable for any lasting social organization. So there is no society, no religion, which do not value and encourage morality. Real democracy which is based on the respect for every person, as an end and sacred centre of value, is logically pledged, therefore, to morality.

On the contrary, any philosophy of man which distrusts man and morals and encourages violence, leads by its very nature to degradation of man in every way. Any revolution based on such a philosophy carries the seed of its own destruction. For, it is caught up in a mounting spiral of force, fear, hatred, suspicion, secrecy, surveillance, purge, exile, assassination and increasing fear. So on it goes, and saves none. No one being above suspicion, all power tends to concentrate into one supreme, military dictator—a living embodiment of denied democracy, seated at the pinnacle of an increasing hierarchy of regimented classes, until the nemesis of outraged humanity takes care of him. A violent revolution extirpates the vanquished, and divides the survivors into two classes—bullies and cowards. It is an all-round ruination of society. Its short-lived glamour of success ends in disillusionment.

This picture of social pathology resulting from violence and neglected morality will strongly remind you of the recent histories of Hitler's Germany, Mussolini's Italy and Stalin's Russia. But let us not indulge in suicidal self-righteousness to gloat over the faults of others. Let us rather reflect with humility on the recent history of India which boasted of Gandhi, Vinoba and Nehru, and let us ponder over the sporadic acts of violence which crept into the otherwise non-violent movement of Gandhiji in 1942, and the demoralizing consequences thereof manifested in the ever-increasing acts of mob violence and governmental reprisals in different parts of the country to-day.

The wise men of India named the basic moral principles *dharma* because, as the *Mahābhārata* says, it holds together or sustains people (—dhāraṇāt dharmam ityāhuḥ, dharmeṇa vidhṛtāḥ prajāḥ).[17] Manu says : "Dharma being ruined ruins, dharma preserved preserves." (Dharma eva hato hanti, dharmo rakṣati rakṣitaḥ).[18] He further adds, to quote the English paraphrase of Tagore : "By unrighteousness man prospers, gains what appears desirable, conquers enemies, but perishes at the root." (Adharmeṇaidhate tāvattato bhadrāṇi paśyati, tataḥ sapatnāñ jayati, samūlastu vinaśyati).[19] How true and prophetic are these wise words, seen in the light of recent history !

Bitter sufferings of the recent past and grim prospects of total destruction have created to-day a great hatred against violence and immoral means all over the world. Through painful ordeals and travails humanity has been developing a much higher moral consciousness in social and international spheres than ever known before. As the nations are coming closer and closer, the best wisdom of all lands and times is being absorbed by the best minds of all countries. It is this moral adolescence of the present age that made it possible for a moral hero like Mahatma Gandhi to be born, and to assimilate, in terms of his native categories, the universal moral precepts of the greatest teachers of the world. His moral genius saw, and tenaciously proved through untold personal suffering and sacrifice, the applicability of all moral principles to all kinds of social organizations. He disproved the common belief that mass enthusiasm necessary for social revolution can be aroused only by fomenting the baser violent passions, and that the enemy can be conquered only by force, and that a subject nation can be liberated only by war.

The possibility of a non-violent revolution by moral persuasion is being demonstrated once again by Gandhi's worthy colleague, Vinoba, who has collected about 5 million acres of voluntary gift for the landless peasants, as the first step towards the equal distribution of land.

17. *Mahābhārata*, Śānti-parva, 109.
18. *Manu-smṛti*, 8, 15.
19. *Ibid.*, 4. 174; quoted by Tagore in *Crisis in Civilization* (Visvabharati, 1941).

This new Indian method of social revolution has awakened great interest and hopes for the violence-weary world. We should like, therefore, to conclude this paper with a brief reflection on the basic philosophy underlying this new approach.

The belief in the innate goodness of man is the foundation of this view. Though it may be said to be inherited by Gandhi and Vinoba from previous thinkers, they adopted it as a practical postulate in all dealings with men, and the results repeatedly confirmed their belief. That there are the selfish animal propensities also in man is not denied. But it is recognized that love, reason and other good moral propensities in him, if encouraged and developed, can overcome the baser inclinations. *Practical dealings prove that the goodness of man can be awakened and increased only by patient, sympathetic and* trustful behaviour—which means that one must oneself be good to be able to arouse the goodness in others. The Gandhian technique starts, therefore, with self-examination, self-purification and self-development as the pre-requisite of social service. To generate the enthusiasm of the people for the attainment of an ideal, the worker must, by his high moral character, have earned the love and respect of the people, and must be prepared to lay down his own life for the ideal, if necessary. The most difficult part of the task is to win over by love and reason even the determined opponent blinded by self-interest and ready to use all immoral and violent means rather than yield an inch of his unrighteous ground. For Gandhi this is the real test of faith. It is a call for increasing the faith in the inner goodness of every man, even an apparent villain, whose villainy is only an outer crust of mistaken ideas and consequent passions which can be removed by loving appeal to reason, by patiently suffering, without bitterness and ill will, the tyrannies of the erring brother until his heart melts into penitent love and his reason shines forth to reveal his errors to him. Repeated practice of this philosophy of man, in private and public dealings in different lands, confirmed Gandhi's faith more and more. Where he failed he blamed *not man*, but his insufficient preparation, and went into solitary heart-searching to find out his shortcomings.

As love and respect for man lie at the centre of this view, and

all moral laws follow therefrom, morality enters into every dealing of man with man—private and public, economic and political, social and cultural, national and inter-national. So there is but *one morality*, for *all* and in *all* spheres. "My life is one indivisible whole, and all my activities run into one another, and they all have their rise in my insatiable love of mankind."[20] This outlook takes a concrete shape in Gandhi's social movement which he names *Sarvodaya*—the uplift of all in all spheres. This bears a contrast not only to the class concern of Communism, but also to the majority concern of Anglo-American Democracy, based on the utilitarian principle of 'the greatest good of the greatest number'—which pattern free India has adopted, leaving the minority to the care of God.

As the Gandhian method implies that every action should be moral, there is no room for a bad means in pursuit of a good end. "As the means so the end." "The means may be likened to a seed, the end to the tree."[21] A bad means bears a bad fruit; and besides, it at once corrupts the doer. Every moral effort ennobles and elevates. It is its own reward, irrespective of success which is not always within one's own control. "Full effort is full victory."[22]

This philosophy of man and morals finds today an echo in every human heart, conscious of the dignity of man. While it appeals to the universal moral sense of all peoples, it admits of being phrased differently in the categories of different cultures and traditions, e.g., of Christianity, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Islam, Judaism, Confucianism, and even of secular, naturalistic humanism, in fact all "those who realize that there is something in man which is superior to the brute nature in him."[23] Gandhi put it to the Indians in the traditional local categories of satya, ahiṁsā, asteya, aparigraha, abhaya, etc., which he revivified into live categories by practising them all his life. He also evolved and vitalized by mass practice new categories to suit new situations, e.g., satyāgraha, sarvodaya, Harijana, non-violent non-cooperation, civil disobedience. etc. Vinoba started

20. *Vide* N. K. Bose, *Selections from Gandhi*, p 45.
21. *Ibid.*, pp. 37-8.
22. *Ibid*, p 30
23 *Ibid.*, p. 183.

with Gandhian categories, and the old Indian ones still moving Indian minds (e.g., dāna, yajña, tyāga, tapas, dharma, etc.). But he has also been evolving new categories to suit his new field (e.g., Bhūdānayajña, Jīvanadāna, loka-nīti, vichāra-śāsana, kartṛtva-vibhājana, śānti-pūrṇa-krānti, etc.).[24] Both Gandhi and Vinoba have their personal theistic 'over-beliefs' (as William James would say). But their social plans are all based on the universal moral principles by following which human society could survive so long, and can progress in the future. In his autobiography, Gandhi even declares that the "*essence of religion is morality.*"[25]

Gandhi had the humility to realize that his social experiments in peaceful moral revolution were far from complete, and there was infinite scope for new experiments and discoveries in this line in different spheres and countries.[26] The path of distrust, hatred and violence has brought humanity face to face with total destruction. There is no choice left to man, therefore, but to retrace his steps, and try to re-organize all social and human relations on the tried principles of human survival—on trust and love, and all that follow therefrom. If social revolution is to avoid the path of destruction, it must necessarily be a moral non-violent revolution.

24. *Vide Bhudana-Yajna* (a weekly, Gaya), *passim.*

25. P. 5 (Public Press Edn.).

26. *Vide* Bose's *Selections*, pp. 25, 31-2. For a fuller treatment reference may be made to our *The Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi* (Wisconsin University Press, 1953, and Cal. Univ., 1968).

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The Concept of Asian Culture

The subject set for discussion in this symposium does not present any pointed question, without which, however, no fruitful and logical discussion is possible. But it allows to the participants the freedom to formulate out of it some relevant questions and answer them. The questions which seem most important to us here are three, namely : (a) What is the meaning of Asian Culture ? (b) Does there exist or did there ever exist anything like Asian Culture ? and lastly (c) Is it desirable to promote or foster the concept of Asian Culture ? We shall discuss these successively.

I. *What is the meaning of 'Asian Culture' ?*

Geographically, Asia and Europe are not as clearly separated from each other by natural boundaries as the other continents are from one another. Consequently, some parts (e.g., the Northern and the middle regions) of the two continents are fairly closely connected. On the contrary, the Himalayas sharply separate some southern parts of Asia from other parts of the same continent. Being the largest of the world's continents covering over 80 degrees of latitude, its climate varies from 165°F (in the equatorial regions of the south) to −94°F (in the north, in East Siberia which is the coldest inhabited part of the world). It is natural, therefore, to find in Asia almost all kinds of fauna and flora, and also nearly all kinds of human races with widely divergent physical features, in respect of stature, complexion, and formation of the parts of the body. It is difficult, therefore, to discover any common natural traits which run through all parts of Asia, or which are present among the diverse peoples that inhabit the continent. One may even wonder how or why this vast and heterogeneous area came to be regarded as one unit.

Be that as it may, for the purpose of the present discussion we have to take the word, Asia, in its present current and accepted geographical denotation, however arbi-

trary[1] that might seem to be. We should remember, however that the word 'Asia' has a more definite meaning than the vague word 'the East' which is very often used almost synonymously with 'Asia' not only by poets (like Rudyard Kipling) and ordinary persons, but also by philosophical writers (like F. S. C. Northrop). They forget that the division of the world into the East and the West presupposes an unmentioned axis of reference which is not clearly fixed, and, therefore, the boundaries of the East and the West are not also clear. Moreover, those who talk of the East and the West altogether drop out of consideration such a big continent as Africa. In spite of such obvious fallacies, the common people, as well as scholarly writers, indulge in the uncritical habit of propounding sweeping generalizations regarding the East and the West and rouse false emotions. It is happy, therefore, that the subject for the present discussion has avoided the vague term 'the East' in favour of the definite term 'Asia'. We should try to avoid here, for the sake of clarity, the vague associations that 'Asia' has with 'the East' or 'the Orient.'

But yet, the meaning of the phrase 'Asian Culture' would not be definite without a clarification of the meaning of 'culture'. Etymologically 'culture' is cognate to 'cultivate' and its original and widest meaning is 'whatever is attained by cultivation'. In this widest sense the culture of man denotes everything, material or non-material, that has been developed and attained by his effort over and above his natural or animal heritage. The culture of the people of any country or continent includes, therefore, the ways in which the people produce and use their houses, their clothes, their food and drink and other commodities, their means of communication, their systems of social, economic and political organization, their language, literature, fine arts, religion, science, philosophy and so on. We shall adopt here this widest sense of the word 'culture', rather than a common but narrower eulogistic sense (e.g., in 'He is a man of culture'), according to which the word means 'trained and refined state of the understanding and manners

1. *Vide Encyclopaedia Britannica* under 'Asia'.
2. *The Oxford Dictionary*.

and tastes'.[1] In the light of this wide meaning of culture and the meaning of Asia previously mentioned we may now turn to the discussion of the next question.

II. Does (or did) there exist anything like 'Asian Culture' ?

We have seen that the physical features, the climates, the fauna and flora and the races of human beings found in the different parts of Asia are widely heterogeneous. As man's efforts for securing the means of survival and expressing himself are largely reactions to and conditioned by the physical environment and his own physical constitution, it is but natural to find very different kinds of culture also in the different parts of this continent. Houses, clothes, foods and drinks, means of communication, languages, etc., evolved in the different parts of Asia are so widely different that the slight points of similarity we discover among them will be found also to be common to other continents too, that is, common to all men, and nothing characteristic of Asia.

The material as well as the non-material components of a culture developed in one region spread to another through easy means of communication, trade, political conquest, and through the dissemination of scientific knowledge, technical devices, literary works and religious beliefs and ideas. In ancient times owing to difficulties of communication and vast distances such factors could operate only to a very limited extent and within limited portions of the Asian continent. There were, of course, some cultural intercourse among the countries south of the Himalayas, and among those north of the Himalayas, but very little across these difficult barriers. Even today with all the quick means of transport there is scarcely any contact, for example, between the people of Siberia, Mongolia and Uzbekistan on the one hand, and India, Burma and Ceylon on the other. These latter countries south of the Himalayas have today much closer cultural relations with Europe and America than with the rest of Asia. On the other hand, Siberia, though forming a large part of Asia, was intimately related with Russia in the past and is more so now. China has also been following suit. Similarly, the middle western countries of Asia, like Turkey and Asia Minor, have always been more closely linked with Europe than

with most other countries in Asia.

While recounting thus the general and remarkable absence of cultural ties binding the whole of Asia we should not forget, however, the limited and sporadic contacts which have existed and still exist between certain countries of this continent. Speaking particularly from the standpoint of India, the earliest cultural tie traceable now is perhaps that between the Vedic Indians and the Avestic Iranians who are supposed, on the evidence of language and religious beliefs and practices, to have stemmed from a common stock. This cultural relation was deepened by the subsequent migration of the Zoroastrians to India. The greatest of all cultural movements in Asia was, however, the spread of Buddhism from India to the West and North upto Central Asia where it has become now only a matter of archaeology, and to the Southern, Eastern, and North-Eastern countries of the continent where it still exists as a living force—particularly in Ceylon, Burma, Siam, Korea and Japan; and also perhaps in China, as a deep undercurrent. Traces of the spread of the Hindu Epical culture of the Rāmāyana and the Māhābhārata age are also to be found still in some of the South-Eastern islands like Java, Sumatra and Bali in curious mixtures of different other cultures. *Not long after Jesus Christ*, St. Thomas, reputed to be a direct disciple of the Prophet, perhaps from Syria, came to South India and established, with the support of the Hindu Kings, the earliest Indian Church, also known as the Syrian Church, which still counts a good many followers there. Similarly, a small section of Judaists migrated from Israel to India where they found asylum, and whose children are still living there with their faith. In later times Islam spread from Arabia to different parts of India as well as Middle and North-East Asia, partly through missionaries and partly through the Muslim political conquerors. North of the Himalayas, China brought together vast territories which adopted one language and evolved one culture which also influenced Japan and other neighbouring lands. But Chinese or Japanese culture did not spread to the South. In more recent times, however, with the political conquest and commercial domination of Asia by the Christian Europeans and Americans, the most pervasive cultural influence on the whole of the Asian

continent has been exerted by Christianity and Euro-American civilization.

From this bird's eye view of the cultural history of Asia it would appear, then, that there has been no cultural influence, either material or non-material, from within Asia which could unify the *whole* of Asia even to a tolerable degree and create anything like a peculiar Asian Culture. Looking very minutely and straining our imagination to some extent, we can perhaps discover a common moral outlook among some of the dominant Asian philosophies of life. For example, we may perhaps recall the early Avestic concept of *Asha* and its Vedic cognate counterpart, *Rta*, the Buddhist concept of *Dhamma* and the Chinese *Tao* —all of which reflect in different ways the faith of these peoples in an impersonal law or moral order reigning in the Universe and ensuring the ultimate triumph of Truth and Righteousness. But this faith is not perhaps present in all parts of Asia—not at least in modern Asiatic Russia and modern China in any explicit form. Moreover, such a faith was present most likely in some form or other in Judaism and Christianity too as prevalent beyond Asia. It is difficult then to find cultural traits common and peculiar only to Asia (or what is loosely called the East) which can differentiate the culture of this continent from that of Europe, for example.

With poetic licence which needs no supporting reason, Kipling propounded the oft-quoted oracle : "East is East and West is West. And never the twain shall meet." Professor F. S. C. Northrop of Yale has taken up Kipling's premise and has supported it in his widely read book : *The Meeting of the East and West*[3] with elaborate scholarly arguments, though he draws a conclusion opposite to Kipling's. He takes great pains to show that the culture of the East, virtually of Asia, (in all its different aspects of religion, morality, politics, economics, art, etc.) is based primarily on the aesthetic or intuitive realization of an undifferentiated, indeterminate continuum, variously conceived and termed as Tao or Jen or Brahman or Nirvana.[4] On the other hand, Western culture (in its corresponding as-

3. Macmillan Company, New York, 1947.
4. *Op. cit.*, pp. 377, 382, *et passim.*

pects) is based chiefly on intellectually or speculatively formulated concepts which are all determinate, but which are not directly observable but only indirectly verifiable by the observation of what observable consequences should deductively follow from these *a priori* concepts.[5] Western science also partakes of this non-aesthetic, theoretical nature. But though the aesthetic components of Eastern culture are thus different from the theoretic components of Western culture, Northrop thinks that the two sets are not *incompatible, but rather complementary.*[6] The East and the West can and should, therefore, meet. Each should perfect itself by taking from the other, and synthesizing with its own culture, what is lacking in it. The hope of the future world lies in such synthesis of intuition and intellect.

Though there are many valuable elements of thought and great insight in Northrop's thesis, and his final conclusion is very wise and timely, it is doubtful if the cultures of the so-called East (which for him is roughly synonymous with Asia), in all ages and places, have been derived, from aesthetic or intuitive concepts and not also from intellectual ones. A similar doubt is also possible about Northrop's view of Western culture. Students of Indian, Chinese and Buddhist philosophy, as also students of Euro-American Philosophy find it difficult, therefore, to accept *in toto* Northrop's simple process of derivation and reduction. We may briefly notice, for our present purpose, the difficulties in accepting Northrop's characterization of Eastern culture, or for the matter of that of Asian culture, as fundamentally aesthetic or intuitive. First, Northrop himself finds it necessary to exclude[7] all the three great theistic religions of Asiatic, but Semitic, origin (namely, Judaism, Christianity and Islam), and even the Shintoism of Japan from the aesthetic type since he thinks that God as conceived by them is a speculative, theoretic concept not based on any direct intuition. So Northrop's hypothesis would not apply to *all Asiatic* cultures of all ages and countries. Secondly, Northrop takes the Upanishadic Brahman, realizable by direct mystic intuition, as the characteristic feature of Indian religion

5. *Ibid.*, pp. 303-3, *et passim*.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 376.
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 408-413.

and the basis of Indian culture in general, ignoring the many later *Indian theisms* known as Vaiṣṇava and the Śaiva schools which command the greatest number of followers in all parts of India. He ignores, moreover, the Nyāya, the Vaiśeṣika, the Sāṅkhya, the Mīmāṁsā and the Jaina schools of Indian thought which do not base their concepts on intuition, but postulate their fundamental imperceptible entities (like atoms, space, time, ether, soul, Nature, God, etc.) on the basis of reasoning. He ignores also the very fundamental and dominant intellectual concepts underlying the major aspects of Indian culture, namely, the concepts of the three guṇas (sattva, rajas and tamas), prakṛti, dharma, adharma, adṛṣṭa, etc., and even the Vedic ṛta (none of which are perceptible entities)—to speak nothing of the fundamental Indian mathematical concepts of number, zero, infinity, etc.[8] We need not mention here many other difficulties. But these few points should suffice to show that even the rather bold hypothesis of Northrop does not help us discover any common fundamental characteristics underlying *all* or even the *major* Asiatic cultures.

We search in vain, then, for any common Asian stamp in the ancient cultures of the Asiatic countries. We wonder if there was even any word for Asia in any of the Asiatic languages. Most likely, the Greeks used the word to denote just a few lands lying to their East. The denotation expanded later until it assumed its present extent.[9]

Cynical as it might sound, Asia has emerged into a unit first in European thought and that in comparatively recent times. What internal unity Asia has attained at present is also primarily through the introduction of European languages, particularly English (which is the medium for us, Asiatics, assembled here), Euro-American methods of communication and transportation, Euro-American commercial, political, ideological and religious domination. These came mostly as the results of industrialization of Europe (and partly of America) which needed foreign market and found it in the non-industrialized, non-mechanical—what is called 'underdeveloped'—countries

8. For fuller information *vide History of Philosophy, Eastern and Western* (George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London, 1952), Vol I, pp. 456-7.

9. *Vide Ency. Brit.* under 'Asia'.

of Asia. Seen in such Euro-American perspective, Asia did present a unity, though a negative one, because it lacked Western science and technology. So, the whole of Asia, compared with Europe, was antiquated and undeveloped. Antiquatedness or primitiveness or non-development caught, therefore, the European eyes as the common character present in all Asiatic countries and their material cultures. Because of this and her vast raw materials, Asia became also an object of temptation and easy exploitation and domination. With the subsequent spread of the European powers in Asia, particularly, of the British Empire, in which the sun never set, Asiatics of distant regions became more positively unified by being yoked to the same foreign rule. So there arose the second phase of unity among most Asiatic countries.

But there was still very little of explicit consciousness of any common Asiatic destiny. This consciousness began to grow chiefly as a result of the education of Asiatics in European and American centres of learning, which made them politically sensitive. It is such consciousness that has been uniting now all the disaffected peoples and countries not only of Asia but also of Africa, all of which were so long exploited and dominated by foreigners. But a further heightening of the Asiatic consciousness has been caused by the attention devoted by the erstwhile European rulers and their allies to Asia as a source of trouble and concern, if not of fear.

A complication, also of foreign origin, has, however, made the Asiatic situation utterly confused. Industrialization of Europe, which led to the impoverishment and exploitation of the undeveloped peoples abroad, also led, by the same inner logic of greed, to the exploitation of the workers at home who, for example, in Russia, retaliated by establishing communism there. Communism has gradually spread over the whole of Northern Asia. It threatens now to swallow the rest of the world by all up-to-date and convenient scientific methods.

Thus, before Asia got a chance of unifying itself independently with the help of its awakened consciousness, the greater half of it has again fallen under European domination in a new form and the remaining smaller half of Asia is now being pulled in two opposite directions by the two opposing European forces

and their allies, both parties professing nothing but altruism, only under the different labels of democracy and communism. Some parts of middle Asia have already ended this oppressive uncertainty by casting in their lot with Euro-American democracy, while the still undecided few have been struggling hard to maintain a united neutrality and precariously pleading for peaceful co-existence with the opposing power blocs into which the whole world stands divided.

Where is Asia then as a unit except on the map, or except perhaps as a common and ready object of greed, exploitation and domination, and as a consequent common source of demoralization of the foreigner? Where can we find *one* Asiatic culture except in the imagination of distant foreigners to whom 'the other side of the river is all green'?

III. Is it desirable to foster the concept of 'Asian Culture'?

Turning now to this last question we proposed to discuss, we should like to point out, first, that the fostering and development of a continental consciousness would be desirable if it be thought necessary for the expansion and enrichment of man's personality and helpful for the fulfilment of his highest destiny or potentiality. The greater obstacle of man on his path of gradual progress is egoism and its companion, selfishness, which are regarded as evil in all societies and in all religions. As Sri Aurobindo aptly puts it, "the enemy of all real religion is human egoism, the egoism of the individual, the egoism of class and nation".[10] By progressively identifying himself with the family, the society, the country or the nation, man can liberate himself gradually from narrower selfishness and widen the bounds of his love and personality. But what should come after the country to liberate man from national egoism? The continent or the world of humanity as a whole? The continent would seem to be the next gradual step judged by geography. In practice, however, though love of the country or the nation has played an important part in the gradual expansion of man, love of the continent has scarcely been used

10. *The Ideal of Human Unity* (Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, 1950), pp. 365-6.

as the next step towards the love of humanity. Because the continent is too much of an arbitrary and conventional unit (except for a small homogeneous and well-bounded continent like Australia) to be able to evoke much of natural love and enthusiasm. Of course the continent receives its share of attention and love indirectly as a part of the world.

Yet it is quite possible to cultivate and develop, by all modern methods of education of public opinion, a continental consciousness and rouse the consequent emotions for ensuring continental unity and solidarity. This can be done (1) by adopting the easier and the more useful and modern diplomatic method of organizing the baser passions of jealousy and hatred against particular classes or foreigners, or (2) by adopting, as Mahatma Gandhi did, the more difficult method, of honestly searching out our own defects and weaknesses which tempted greed and invited exploitation, and shedding these vices and uniting ourselves for self-defence and self-improvement on the basis of truth and love. The first method may be of temporary political advantage, but the violent passions once roused would lead to increasing enmity and also internal conflict, as the last two great wars have shown. It would mean also growing disaster for the continent and demoralization for the nations and individuals. The second method alone can bring about increasing peace and happiness for the continent and humanity, and ensure also the progress of the individual towards his high spiritual destiny.

Fortunately, this better path happens to be in perfect tune with the best teachings of the great ancient prophets, seers and wise men of Asia. These teachings have, again, been assimilated and synthesized by some modern Indian sages like Tagore, Gandhi, and Aurobindo and revived in different spheres and practical forms for the regeneration of the individuals as well as the nation, so that both can fulfil their destinies along the path of human amity. By following this higher path of Asha, Ṛta, Dhamma, Tao, Jen, Kannagara or Aman—in accordance with the best accepted ideals of their respective cultures—the Asiatics can unify themselves, reform themselves, as well as others, and promote the peace and happiness of themselves and the world. It is also by following this

higher moral path that Asia can overcome narrow sectarianism and can also best utilize the scientific and technical knowledge received from Europe and America to the best advantage of all. Without a proper spiritual direction in life and without an increase of moral power, the growth of scientific knowledge will only make us join the race that is taking the world towards self-annihilation. The two great lessons we Asiatics can learn from the history of the decline of the West is to avoid religious sectarianism, and to avoid the blind worship of Science and Technology, the proper use of which should be guided by moral and spiritual principles.[11] The history of Asia, particularly, of India, also should serve as a great warning against sectarian religiosity.

We should by all means foster, then, the concept of Asian culture. Only, it should not be inspired by motives and based on methods which have ruined Asia and Europe, and which we ourselves hate in the non-Asiatic exploiters. Nor, therefore, should the fostering of Asiatic culture mean the fostering of continental egoism or class egoism blocking the way to international understanding and the love of humanity. If Asiatic culture be fostered on the best wisdom of ancient and modern Asia, briefly indicated above, then Asian culture can assimilate, to its great advantage, the best elements of other cultures as well. That will mean the fostering of a culture which can reconcile man with man, man with himself, man with Nature and ultimately also unfold the Divine in man. No culture is really worthy of human pursuit which does not gradually take man towards that supreme goal.

11. *Vide* Professor Arnold J. Toynbee's *The World and the West* and his article in *The Hibbert Journal*, July, 1954, entitled 'Pharisee or Publican'.

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The Psychology of Culture Conflict

In the Light of Psychology of Insanity

When a person is described as a man of culture it is meant that he is possessed of *good* culture, just as when we say that he is a man of character we mean that he is of good character. But in anthropology the word culture is used in a wide and neutral sense without any suggestion of valuation—praise or reproach. It stands for a group of interconnected and persistent traits, habits, and attitudes found in a class of human beings of a particular place and time. The cultural traits of a particular group of people become conspicuous when they are compared and contrasted with those of groups occupying other places and times. Anthropologists are thus able to discover and classify the distinctive tendencies and habits of different classes of men in respect of food, dress, shelter, utensils, tools, weapons, agriculture, industry, language, art, architecture, mythology, beliefs, religious ceremonies, organization of family, society and government, moral codes and ideologies. It is difficult to give an exhaustive list of what culture denotes. But roughly speaking, *culture includes all that man has developed and acquired over and above his animal heritage.*.

Culture is *primarily* the character of a society, not of the individual. The individual born in a society only inherits and continues its culture. But a few individuals possessing extraordinary talents and initiative may develop new cultural traits and tendencies which may even change those of the society. But such phenomena are very rare, though they are very important since they represent critical moments in the life of society when revolutionary changes take place in religion, politics and other spheres.

When individuals or societies possessing different cultures are brought together by migration, trade, invasion or any other cause, there is occasion for the contact of two cultures. Contact of cultures does not necessarily lead to conflict. When the representatives of two different cultures have mutual respect

or even indifference, no conflict can arise. Such relations are possible only when the two parties are on equal footing, or when the one does not try to challenge or overpower the other. Conflict arises when, for example, people of a different culture invade and conquer another and thrust their own culture upon the conquered, or when one religion, even without any political conquest, tries to replace another, or when invention of superior mechanical devices challenges antiquated methods of production, transport, etc., or when the newly discovered truths challenge erroneous beliefs and habits of life based thereon. There may be other similar causes for conflict of cultures. Moreover, it is not necessary that the infliction of a new culture should always come from outside. Radical reformers of a society or country may try from within to change the material, intellectual or spiritual culture of their own people by persuasion, legislation and even coercion, as has happened, for example, in Turkey and Russia, in respect of material as well as spiritual culture. In some cases, again, there may be no infliction at all. The pressure of changed conditions may tempt or force people to give up existing habits in respect of food, dress, building, methods of warfare, transport, etc., for more advantageous ones. As recent examples of such phenomena, may be cited the many changes that have taken place in India owing to the last war. Shorts and trousers and European costume in general have been replacing indigenous dresses which require more cloth and are less suited to active life; wheat, maize and gram and other available cereals have been partly replacing rice even in localities where rice used to be the only staple food.

Material culture can change more easily than non-material culture. The dress of a country, for example, may be changed more easily than its beliefs, outlook and attitudes. In cases of conflicts, if there is coercion the coerced people may change their external behaviour but not so easily their minds. On the contrary, the overpowered would usually try to *compensate* for their external defeat by developing a mental resistance against the encroaching culture and sticking mentally more tenaciously to the old culture. Repression of one culture by another may thus manifest all the morbid phenomena of

individual psychology. *Dissociation*, *distortion*, *projection*, *rationalization*, *delusion*, *inversion*, *substitution*, *regression* and similar phenomena of an abnormal mind can appear, in different degrees, in a society, whose culture is repressed. In extreme cases there may be *social insanity*, if such a term is allowed, in analogy with individual insanity, for expressing the state of extreme maladjustment obtaining in a group of individuals who suffer from *phobias*, *phantasies*, *delusions*, utter irresponsibility and irrationality in its behaviour with a rival group—all recognised symptoms of insanity—which are found, for example, in a society as a whole when a *war* or a *communal riot* breaks out.

India, like some other countries, has witnessed successive conflicts of cultures in course of its history. Clashes between the cultures of the Aryans and the non-Aryans, the Islamic and the non-Islamic, the European and the Indian may be mentioned as major examples. The social history of India is, therefore, replete with the phenomena of culture conflicts. I shall present below a very brief account of some of these in the light of abnormal psychology just to show the interesting resemblance they bear to some of the phenomena of individual insanity. I shall show also the possibility of easing culture conflicts by psychological methods.

Dissociation of personality which, in its extreme form, characterizes schizophrenia can be found, in different degrees and forms, in some phenomena resulting from culture conflicts. A defeated or weaker group sometimes tries to *withdraw* from reality and retire into an inner life within its own group or coterie where the threatened traits of culture are dissociated and zealously preserved in isolation. The group limits its dealings with the rival group to matters regarding which there is little or no conflict. But sometimes even the dominating group may take to such defensive mechanism of withdrawal and dissociation out of fear for contamination by, what it regards as, an inferior culture. Untouchability, colour-prejudice, *purdah*, *burqa*, restriction of dining, marrying and other forms of social intercourse to one's own class may be cited as ordinary examples of such withdrawal. Isolation develops sometimes to such a degree that certain rituals, and even the taking of food, are not allowed within the visibility of certain classes the very

appearance of whom becomes tabooed as inauspicious. If circumstances do not permit such isolation, some *substitutes* are devised. For example, if compelled to dine together in the same hall or yard, care is taken to avoid sitting in the same geometrical line with the undesirables or to draw a dividing line on the ground with the finger-nails or with drops of water and create thus the fantasy of virtual isolation. Such phenomena, though fast disappearing, can still be observed in India among some people who have not yet adjusted themselves to changed circumstances.

The fear of contamination sometimes develops into *obsessions* and *phobias* (resembling *misophobia*) in some individuals of the *schizoid* group. They are found, therefore, to avoid contact even with paths, places, water tanks, and other things used by people outside their group and such avoidance reaction becomes conditioned to even a distant thing by a long chain of intermediate links ultimately connected with the impure. Repeated washing and bathing, resembling acts of *compulsion neuroses* or *manias*, are adopted as a literal process of *catharsis* to create the feeling of washing away the defilement produced by direct and indirect contact.

The emotions of hatred and disgust towards representatives of the rival culture become sometimes transferred to their customs and to the very classes of things used by them, or specially liked by them, or otherwise associated with them. They gradually generate certain group attitudes and *stereotypes* symbolized by words like 'foreign,' 'alien,' 'barbarian', 'kafir,' '*mlechchha*,' 'semitic,' 'slavish,' 'coloured,' 'fascist,' 'nazi,' etc., which are charged with intense emotions of hatred and disgust. Food, dress, architecture, language, etc., of the opposite group come to be tabooed in this way. The Hindu attitude towards beards (with shaved moustaches), *lungis* and *pyjamas* (in some provinces), fez caps, fowl (in some provinces), *badnas* (*i.e.* water pots with nozzles), the *halal* (or partial decapitation) method of butchering animals would only remind one of the Muslim attitude towards a head with a tuft of hair (*shikha*), dhotis (in some provinces), pigs, cow-dung, temples, the *jhatka* (or complete decapitation) method of slaughtering animals.

But though differences in religion account for some differences in culture, by far the greater part of cultural differences are due to non-religious sources. Religion is only a small fraction, as we have seen, of the large mass of traits that compose a particular culture. Many of the differences are based on local customs of mostly unknown origin. An orthodox Hindu Bengali, for example, has a strong prejudice against *lungi* dress, onion, marriage with a person within the seventh generation on the mother's side, etc., which are very normal for even an orthodox Brahmin of South India, whereas the latter has a strong repugnance against the former's habit of taking fish and meat. A Bengali Hindu may not even touch fowl but a Punjabi Hindu may even eat it. A Punjabi Muslim is shocked to see a Bengali Muslim wearing *dhoti*, using the Bengali script, and taking rice soaked in thin soup or dāl by dipping all the fingers through which a part of the stuff falls back to the plate to be taken up again (a process which a Punjabi Muslim once described to the author with a feeling of great disgust). But the former would be shocked to see the latter tearing his bread with both hands, using water very sparingly for personal hygiene, not bathing regularly every day, and so on. Local cultural traits and the local dialect, in particular, can unite the followers of different faiths to such an extent that one would feel a greater kinship with his village neighbour of a different faith than with a member of the same faith coming from a distant place. The Assamese Muslim is more akin to the Hindu of his own village than to his co-religionist of Madras or the Punjab or China, in point of language, racial traits, dress, food, customs and a large number of things *which far outweigh the one point of similarity called religion.*

Withdrawal, isolation and exclusiveness, which characterize the initial stage of the conflict of cultures, gradually break down when two rival groups are compelled by circumstances to live together and make mutual adjustments. At this stage of conflict there may be partial relaxation of exclusiveness, with the acceptance of some irresistible elements of alien culture and partial maintenance of the old culture. Such compromise may be the result of rational thinking and efforts for harmony and reconciliation by those powerful members of the group

called social reformers who can appeal to the sense of *human unity* and generate friendly emotions strong enough to break down the resistance of the first stage of negativism. But in most cases adjustment comes by very gradual and imperceptible changes of habit by the mechanical pressure of circumstances which overpower the social censor or partially desensitize it.

So long as harmony has not been brought about by conscious efforts, or by slow changes, the conflict between the newly accepted elements of culture may present logical conflict with the incompatible elements of the previous culture still adhered to. Such conflict is often overcome by methods which closely resemble the mechanisms of *logic-tight compartments* and *rationalization* discussed in abnormal psychology.

There are numberless instances of such phenomena, too, in modern Indian life. We can cite here a few of them. There are many Hindus who would take any amount of *aqua pura* poured in bottles of medicines by untouchables, may even take a bottle of soda water from them, but would not take a glass of plain water touched by them. If the anomaly is pointed out, they would perhaps rationalize and defend themselves by saying, 'A sick man need not observe a custom', or 'Medicines are exceptions'. There are many Indians who would ignore all scruples about caste and food in an English party or on a journey, but at home or in a communal dinner would not even sit in the same row with a man of a different caste. They would defend their conduct by some rationalization like, "Parties and journeys are exceptions." Many Hindus in the South have accepted Christianity, which is meant for the church, and yet retained caste-distinctions which are kept up as affairs outside the jurisdiction of the church. In some north Indian provinces food cooked in butter, *e.g.*, *puris* (*Pakki rasoi*), can be taken from some castes whose touch will defile other kinds of cooked food like *chapati*, rice and *dal* (*Kachchi rasoi*). Vegetables cooked without or with salt are similarly segregated in two logic-tight compartments. In general, an Indian with European education and with faultless external imitation of European culture is mostly found to have retained deep-rooted under-currents of indigenous culture. Beneath the English hat there is perhaps a tuft of hair tightly brushed back, beneath the neck-tie

the sacred thread or necklace or a cord suspending a few amulets, beneath the sleeves perhaps a wristlet or armlet containing another charm. And perhaps an unmistakable communal symbol will also be found on the person. But his body is only a reflection of his mind, in which there is a top layer of European ideas gathered in schools and colleges, and beneath it thick strata of ideas resembling those of his great-grandmother. He has imitated a lot, but assimilated very little, and the imitations are not logically linked up with the pre-existing ideas. European ideas and indigenous ones are locked up in two *logic-tight compartments.*

The recent political rivalry between the Hindus and Muslims of India has rudely disturbed the process of mutual adjustment which had been gradually reconciling the two religious traditions. New conflicts have given rise to some fresh abnormal phenomena. The chief among these is what resembles *regression* (or the tendency to go back to childhood to enjoy its advantages), as found in an abnormal individual. For achieving political advantages, some leaders of both communities are reviving and strengthening certain incompatible communal attitudes which were long overgrown and left behind. Thus typical communal dresses, customs and practices are being resorted to even by Europeanized members though they may not believe in them. The communities are, again, driven back to political puerility under threats of insecurity of the adult life of independence. They are being made to wish back the secure life of dependence under the maternal care of the British government.

Again, mutual suspicion and the ill-repressed desire to crush the rival community have led each community *to project* such motives on the adversary, and, therefore, each suffers under the constant *delusion* of attack by the enemy, and like a patient suffering from persecuting paranoia, it takes fright at the slightest movement of the rival and suspects it as a move for establishing Hindu Raj or Muslim Raj.

Sometimes, again, this panic alternates with opposite kinds of delusions with grandiose ideas. The leaders or members of the rival communities then begin to draw exaggerated pictures of their own strength and superiority and threaten to crush the

enemy and steep the country in bloodshed. It is so like patients suffering from megalomania.

Space does not permit the citation of many other similar interesting abnormal phenomena that can be observed in modern Indian life. Such phenomena can also be found in many other countries. I shall bring the paper to a close with a *brief suggestion about the solution of these problems* in the light of psycho-therapy. There are four chief psychological methods for the treatment of *individuals* suffering from mental diseases, namely, *suggestion, catharsis, desensitisation* and *re-education.* These represent the contributions of Freud, Jung and other psychiatrists whose efforts can be taken to supplement one another. It is possible to apply these methods also for the treatment of a society or country suffering from conflicts of culture, provided there are social workers and leaders possessing the qualities required of a successful mental physician, namely, insight, sympathetic understanding, practical tact, and a personality that can inspire trust.

The chief work of *suggestion* here would be reassurance and encouragement given to the people, through all sources of propaganda or information, to make them believe that *social conflicts can be cured.* Without creating such confidence the desperation which undermines patience and prompts precipitate actions cannot be stopped. The method of *catharsis,* in social therapy, would consist in bringing before the mind of the people the causes that lie at the root of conflict and maladjustment and in making them face the unavoidable situations with a realistic attitude. For this purpose it is necessary to impart to the people of India, for example, the knowledge of (1) the history of the different cultures which have mingled together and contributed to the different traits, (2) the origins and intermixture of the different races composing the Indian population, (3) the distinction between the valuable and abiding elements of culture and the lower ones which hamper progress and harmony, (4) the many compromises which have been already made, in this country and other countries under similar conditions, by sacrificing unessentials. Knowledge of the classics, essential scriptures and history would be useful for social workers for this purpose in addition, of course, to Psychology.

Desensitization consists in dulling and deadening sensitiveness by making the subject think of and face repeatedly mentally the provoking or painful situations without giving rise to violent emotions. The application of this to social therapy would be, for an example, to make the Hindus think of things like the 'slaughter of cows' in different perspectives, such as in the light of numberless other animals destroyed by many Hindus for food, worship and game, the literary evidences of cow slaughter by the Hindus of ancient India, etc., and make, similarly, the Muslims think of things like music before mosque in the light of musical performances accompanying Muslims' ceremonies, in other countries and even in some parts of India, and so on.

By repeated showing of the cause of conflict in new lights which can allay destructive emotions, new attitudes of toleration, sympathy, etc., can be built up towards the causes of conflict, so that people can thus be made to learn to behave in new and more sensible manners in situations which used previously to provoke the undesirable emotions. This process constitutes *re-education.* What passes today in the Indian press, and elsewhere, in the name of education of public opinion, is mostly interested propaganda to dupe people into emotions and attitudes, which will help the perpetuation of the positions and interests of a handful of leaders, even at the cost of the people. Propaganda can be so conducted that differences and conflicts may go on multiplying until the country is divided to a man. This would be the picture of social mind suffering from multiple personality. On the other hand, *public education can be so re-oriented* that the valuable aspects of unity would be more and more emphasized, mutual considerations and common interests more and more developed, until the country would acquire a solidarity, a unity in diversity, which is the picture of a healthy mind. The facts that the Hindus and the Muslims of India could actually live in harmony, visit each other's shrines, join in each other's festivities, donate lands and money for religious and educational institutions of each other and so on, even until recent times, would show that throwing of brick-bats, stabbing of knives, abduction of women and setting of fire are not the only possible ways in which the two communities can treat each other.

However new in name the psychological methods of curing maladjustment may appear to be, their essential principles were known and practised in many lands. A realistic view of life in wide and dispassionate *philosophical perspectives*, and the *training of emotions* and the reformation of conduct in accordance with these, constituted the common formula of moral improvement in the different schools of Indian philosophy. Cultural conflicts, individual and social, cannot be removed unless these good principles are applied to social life. But it should not be forgotten that the application of the psychological methods for curing a patient depends for its success also on certain *auxiliary means*, such as change of environment, healthy occupation, recreation and diversion. Similarly, mere psychological handling of social conflicts cannot succeed without wholesome changes in the material, economic and political environment, employment of the members of society in productive pursuits, and diversion of surplus and pent up energy to the cultivation of higher values which make for human solidarity and satisfy the higher aspirations of man.

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4

INDIA'S DEBT TO OTHER LANDS

India's Debt to the West in Philosophy

I

Even a few generations ago, Indians, who knew only their own philosophy and little or nothing of the West, believed very confidently that philosophy, and perhaps spirituality and culture in general, belonged to India—just as many Western people, ignorant of the East, think about their own philosophical and cultural traditions even today. But this complacency of Indians was gradually shattered, chiefly by nearly two hundred years of British rule, the British system of education through English, destructive preaching by Christian missionaries, and the phenomenal achievements of the West in science and technology.

Those who studied at the British type of universities, such as at Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay (started around 1850), could study only Western philosophy, the courses being deductive and inductive logic (in the preliminary college classes), psychology, ethics, metaphysics, natural theology, history of philosophy (Greek, medieval, and modern), and some special texts (or translations) of Western philosophical classics. Though during the last thirty years or so, with the increase of Indian teachers, Indian philosophy (mostly in English translation) has begun to be introduced, even today, twenty four years after political independence, it does not occupy more than a fifth or a fourth part of the entire course. The only places where Indian philosophy continued to be studied were the indigenous Sanskrit academies, but these went on languishing with the spread of Western education.

Consequently, a rather unnatural situation has arisen which most Western scholars fail to realize, namely, that for about a hundred years philosophy graduates of Indian universities have been studying mostly Western philosophy, adopting its problems, its theories, and its ways of thinking as their own. Only a few inquisitive scholars, after finishing their university education, have tried to study the original abstruse Sanskrit

texts with the help of the teachers of philosophy at the indigenous academies. It is by such private study that S. Radhakrishnan, S. N. Dasgupta, K. C. Bhattacharya, R. D. Ranade, and other modern distinguished philosophers and writers came to acquire scholarship in Indian philosophy. Indian philosophy is thus more alien to Indian universities than Western philosophy, which is deep-rooted there and needs scarcely any special persuasion.

Professor W. H. Sheldon's wise and mature counsel in his article entitled "What Can Western Philosophy Contribute to Eastern ?"[1] will therefore be widely appreciated in India as a further stimulus and guide. Perhaps Indian students and teachers of Western philosophy will be eager to add many more reasons, depending on their respective inclinations, in favour of the study of Western philosophy, such as its living and dynamic growth, its keeping pace with scientific developments and social trends, its successful revolt against authority, its well-recorded history, and, above all, its being the philosophy of the most influential people of the world, and so on. They will also appreciate Sheldon's helpful bibliography, many of the books in which are familiar to them. But most will like to supplement the list with ancient and modern classics, as distinguished from contemporary ones, to have a balanced view of the entire Western field—which the Indian university courses always try to cover.

Taking philosophy in a wide sense, we shall try to discuss briefly how modern India has been benefited by the West, not only in respect of academic philosophy, but also regarding the general philosophical outlook that underlies social, political, and spiritual life. This is an attempt to think out the multiple debt that modern India owes, not only to professional philosophers, but also to other scholars and thinkers who have helped India in her gradual cultural recovery. This effort is evoked by the new era of mutual appreciative understanding exemplified by the articles in this journal, particularly the recent one by Professor E. A. Burtt, entitled "What Can Western Philosophy Learn from India ?"[2]

1. *Philosophy East and West*, V, No. 4 (January, 1956), 291-304.
2. *Ibid.*, V, No. 3 (October, 1955), 195-210.

II

It is necessary, but depressing, to mention that though Indians acquired through the British system of education a wonderful mastery of English and scholarship in different subjects, sometimes astonishing to the British themselves, yet they developed, as a rule, imitative personalities devoid of the *power of independent judgment and critical appreciation* of the things learned. Moreover, as English was the sole medium of instruction, these Westernized scholars learned, thought, and wrote in English, without bothering to understand what the Western concepts meant in terms of the Indian concepts and beliefs which influenced their life and the life of the people (of whom they formed barely one per cent). Sadly enough, for a long time, and even now to some extent, Western ideas and Indian ones have occupied, more or less, two "logic-tight compartments" which have not rationally confronted one another. In the absence of cultural confidence and freedom of judgment necessary for proper assimilation, India, though superficially Westernized, failed to derive the full benefit of Western education.

In more recent times, and more especially since the attainment of political independence, the Indian mind has been gradually recovering confidence and freedom. Paradoxical as it might appear, the West which had repressed India, has also helped her regain her lost individuality. This aspect of India's debt to the West deserves to be stated, therefore, before the others.

Mention should be made, first, of the successive generations of European and American Orientalists who dedicated their entire lives to studying, compiling, editing, and translating the basic Indian texts, and to the writing of expository treatises on Indian culture, religion, and philosophy. They are too many to be named, but chief among them are Max Müller, Thibaut, Oldenberg, Jacobi, Venis, Cowell, Stcherbatsky, Winternitz, Bloomfield, Hopkins, Roth, Rhys Davids, Lanman, Warren, Woods, Hume, Macdonell, Keith, Poussin, Tucci, and others. Scores of large volumes containing critical editions and translations published in the Sacred Books of the

East Series, the Harvard Oriental Series, and the like, stand to the credit of such Western scholars. It is these dedicated souls whose selfless devotion roused the drooping faith of Indians in their own cultural heritage. It is, again, through the English translations and expositions of these scholars that the philosophy students of Indian universities, as well as others, innocent of the Indian classics, began to learn the content of their own ancient texts. This shameful fact continues to be true.

We should mention also a similar influence exerted by the general works on Indian culture by Western savants. Max Müller's *India : What Can It Teach Us ?*,[3] Edwin Arnold's *The Light of Asia*, *The Song Celestial*,[4] Sir John Woodroffe's *Is India Civilized ?*,[5] Ralph Waldo Emerson's works, Annie Besant's many writings on Indian culture published by the Théosophical Society, and Romain Rolland's books on Ramakrishna, Vivekananda, and Gandhi are some of the books which not only interpreted India to the West, but also drew the attention of oblivious Indians to their proud heritage.

We should also mention here a few Western philosophers who outgrew the general apathy to alien thought, interested themselves in Indian philosophy, and accorded it, to different extents, a place in Western philosophical discussion. Indian students and writers still quote with pride what Schopenhauer said about the Upaniṣads, which he read in the translation of a translation, viz. : "In the whole world there is no study, except that of the originals, so beneficial and so elevating as that of the Oupanikhat. It has been the solace of my life, it will be the solace of my death."[6] William James, who was impressed by Vivekananda's exposition of Vedānta, discussed this view in connection with the problem of the One and the Many, and waxed eloquent : "The paragon of all monistic systems is Vedanta philosophy of Hindostan. . . ."[7] James's

3. London : Longmans & Co., 1892.
4. Edwin Arnold, *The Light of Asia* (London : Trübner, 1903) and *The Song Celestial* (Boston : Little, Brown & Co., 1904).
5. *Madras : Ganesh & Co., 1918.*
6. Quoted by S. N. Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy* (Cambridge : The University Press, 1932—1935), Vol. I, p. 40, from Schopenhauer's Preface to his *Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, R. B. Haldane and J. Kemp, trans.
7. *Pragmatism* (New York : Longmans, Green & Co., 1916), p. 151.

eminent colleague, Josiah Royce, also devoted some thought to Indian concepts, and at least considered them worthy of serious discussion at several places in *The World and the Individual.* But Paul Deussen, who had acquired a profound scholarship in Indian philosophy and wrote authoritative books like *The Philosophy of the Upaniṣads* and *The System of Vedānta,* was the first, and until now the only, Western historian of philosophy who gave a significant place to Oriental thought. Of the six volumes of his *Allgemeine Geschichte der Philosophie,*[8] he devoted the first three to Indian, Chinese, and Japanese thought, the first covering about two volumes and a half. Though compared with Orientalists the number of such appreciative philosophers was very small, yet their recognition of Indian philosophy carried great weight with the Indian students of philosophy who mostly depended on *their* judgment.

It is encouraging to find, as the readers of this journal must also have noted, that of late there has been a growing number of philosophers, particularly American, who are becoming interested in Indian philosophy, ancient and modern, and have been trying to integrate it into the main stream of Western philosophy in different ways, by writing articles and books, compiling books of readings, and giving courses. The publication of a big volume, *The Philosophy of Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan* (1952), in the Library of Living Philosophers Series, edited by Paul Schilpp, is a recent recognition accorded to modern Indian thought.

Modern India is thus indebted to Western Orientalists, thinkers, and academic philosophers for rediscovering for her, her philosophical heritage and its meaning and value in the modern light and for helping her regain her lost confidence.

We may consider now, in the succeeding sections, how the West has influenced the three intimately interconnected spheres —academic, religious, and socio-political—where modern Indian philosophy is struggling to take shape out of the crosscurrents of world thought.

8. Leipzig : F. A. Brockhaus, 1920.

III

It has been mentioned already that at the universities, which constitute virtually the academic world for philosophy, at least three-fourths of the subjects taught and the pattern of teaching are all Western, Indian philosophy being interspersed only here and there. Since independence, there have been several attempts at reorientation and reorganization; and, though interspersing has increased in some universities, the main pattern has remained. The nationalizing tendency has chiefly been moving in the direction of replacing the English medium of instruction by the mother tongue. This move is not only natural but also necessary if ninety-nine per cent of the population, ignorant of English, are to receive the benefits of modern education without having to go through the long and baffling ordeal of learning a foreign language. It will be beneficial, too, particularly for philosophy, because the Western concepts lying now unassimilated, and on the surface of the mind, will have the opportunity of being converted into current Indian concepts and will thus form a part of the real mind, ending thereby the pathological condition of logic-tight compartments previously mentioned. We cannot forget, of course, that this change will not be without some loss. In spite of the fact that English is being retained as a compulsory subject of instruction (though now abandoned as a medium of instruction for all subjects), the number of persons capable of directly participating in the gradually expanding English atmosphere of thought in the world will considerably diminish. India is facing a real dilemma here. The counsel of the most influential leaders of the modern Indian renascence, such as Tagore and Gandhi, who were also internationalists, has been unequivocal: We must stand on our own feet, even if bare, rather than in borrowed shoes, if we want to stand erect and free to embrace the world. This counsel of self-respect still dominates.

In the process of reorganization, there is no tendency to drop any of the branches of Western philosophy. As to the benefits derived from the study of these branches, though opinions may vary, we may briefly mention the following as

being very palpable:

(a) Indian philosophy presents a large number of rival systems of thought, each trying to solve the problems of human destiny by providing a coherent system of metaphysics, epistemology, logic, and ethics refuting rival theories, and all developing among themselves a vast wealth of philosophical literature during a period of nearly three thousand years. But the historical perspective is all but absent. Most Indian thinkers and writers were averse to telling anything about themselves. Chronology and history have thus become difficult. The Indian student finds, on the other hand, in the well-recorded history of Western philosophy, from Thales to date, a long view of the successive development of the philosophical thought of a large section of the human race during about twenty-five centuries. This history unfolds to him some of the basic laws and rhythms of human speculation, as, for example, the advancement of thought through successive cycles of dogmatism, scepticism, and criticism, construction, destruction, and reconstruction. It enables him to discriminate between the passing and the abiding, the local and the universal, the troughs and crests in the evolution of human thought. This historical outlook has been further reinforced by the study of the (biological and general) theory of evolution, which may be regarded as the one theory which distinguishes modern (post-Darwinian) Western thought from all earlier thought, and which has exerted the most pervasive influence on all branches of modern knowledge. This historical-evolutionary outlook of the West has impregnated almost every sphere of modern Indian thought.

(b) The study of Western metaphysics, logic, and ethics has provided a vast wealth of problems, methods, and theories, contributing thoroughness to intellectual education. But it has also enabled the Indian scholar to compare and contrast Indian ideas with Western ideas, understand both in wider perspectives, discover common and divergent elements, and try to evolve, if possible, a global horizon of thought transcending provincial ones. It should be mentioned, however, that recent attempts to express Western concepts in the mother tongue have revealed the instructive fact that some of the

English discussions in logic, ethics, and even in metaphysics lose their meaning and value in translation, because they involve analysis of the meanings and nuances of the English words lacked by the nearest Indian equivalents. On the other hand, some of the comparatively new and characteristic concepts of the modern West, such as evolution, organic, dynamic, objective, rights, values, personality, etc., have so strongly captured the Indian mind that new words have been coined, or these English words have been bodily naturalized, and they have taken root in philosophy as well as in common parlance.

(c) Western psychology, still a part of philosophical studies in India, has yielded a world of useful information, has helped students understand ethics and epistemology better, and has opened up new lines of research in Yoga and Buddhism. It has also influenced the study of religion and art, and the growth of Indian literature, though the abuse of Freudian psychology has caused much mischief, as in the West.[9]

On the whole, then, in the academic sphere, the study of Western philosophy has ushered in a much wider outlook than would have been possible if the Indian universities taught only Indian philosophy. Things would have been still better if Chinese and Japanese philosophy had also received some attention. Intimate acquaintance with Western philosophy for over a century has brought the Indian mind to the midstream of Western thought. These facts are evident from the philosophical literature of modern India. S. N. Dasgupta's five-volume *A History of Indian Philosophy*,[10] S. Radhakrishnan's two-volume *Indian Philosophy*,[11] R. D. Ranade's *A Constructive Survey of Upanisadic Philosophy*,[12] and many other recent publications on the different systems of Indian philosophy by Indian scholars show that the plans of the works, the historical prespective, the organization and the naming of the topics, the comparisons drawn, the authorities cited, and the entire

9. See H. J. Eysenck, *Uses and Abuses of Psychology* (London, Baltimore : Penguin Books, 1953).
10. London : Cambridge University Press.
11. London : George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1923, 1927.
12. Poona : Academy of Religion and Philosophy, 1926.

orientation of the works are the fruits of acquaintance with Western philosophy and Western Orientalists' methods of research. Even the readers addressed are Westerners or Westernized Indians. Even in such a profoundly original constructive work as *The Subject as Freedom*[13] by K. C. Bhattacharya, who was temperamentally averse to citation of authorities and historical illustrations and loved to move in the realm of logical possibles and their implications, one can trace well-digested elements and concepts of Western thought with which he was thoroughly conversant. It could not have been otherwise, as long as the medium of expression was English. One of the bad and amusing effects of the interpretation of Indian philosophy in the light of Western thought, however, has been successive changes in affiliation with the changing winds of fashion in the West. Vedānta, for example, has been explained and justified by Indians, during this century, with the help of Parmenides, Zeno, Plato, Spinoza, Kant, Hegel, Bradley, James, Alexander, Russell, Bergson, Einstein, and, recently, the Existentialists. This often reminds us of the warning that Sir B. N. Seal, one of the early Indian pioneers of comparative philosophy, used to give his pupils at Calcutta University: "Do not try to affiliate Indian ideas to Western ones."

IV

We may inquire now how Western thought has influenced the religious and mystical sphere of the modern Indian renascence. For this purpose we shall consider Christianity to be Western, as it has developed mostly in the West.

Religion in India, for at least three thousand years since Upaniṣadic times, has been, with few exceptions, a process of *sādhanā*, a life-long effort to realize and live the truths of some explicitly formulated system of philosophy. These truths, again, are accepted when realized in life, the process of realization, in general, being studying or listening to (*śravaṇa*) the views of accredited authorities, critically examining them by reasoning (*manana*), intensive and continuous meditation

13. Amalner, Bombay : Indian Institute of Philosophy, 1930

(*nididhyāsana*) of the views rationally accepted, and then consolidating them in life by a three-level practice in thought, speech, and action (*manas*, *vāḱya*, and *kāya*). The success of this process is marked by vivid realization, direct knowledge or *seeing* truths.

There is nothing mysterious about this process. Western psychology throws ample light on the possibility of the conversion of mediate knowledge into immediate perception through repeated thought, practice, and association. That is how we have come to *see* the depth of outer objects (even of paintings), to *see* distance, hardness of stones, sharpness of blades, anger in a face, and even danger in a sinister smile. We can also see ourselves in the mirror and time on the watch. We can even see values in dollar notes, where a child sees none. I have come to see and feel directly that I am the body. There is no wonder, therefore, that mediately acquired knowledge of some philosophical truths might be turned into immediate perception by a similar process. It does not follow, however, that such knowledge must always be true. The founder of each major philosophical school in India is called a seer (*ṛṣi*), and the word for "philosophy" is "*darśana*", etymologically equivalent to seeing, as Burtt rightly points out in the article referred to. But the seers also refute one another. Nevertheless, they still command respect by their honest and sincere efforts, their lives of dedication, and their wisdom, all of which possess a strong appeal to persons who come in contact with them, and invite them to try to test the truths themselves in the same sincere way, if there is a strong *prima facie* case in favour of such truths.

This traditional conception of the intimate relation between religion and philosophy is still accepted in India. A philosophy that issues out of the teachings of a person of realization has much greater appeal than that of a mere academic teacher who "does philosophy" for a living or out of a passion for it as an "intellectual game"—as the modern Indian academic philosopher does. On the other hand, philosophy is expected to be effective—energetic (*tejasvin*), as the Upaniṣadic teacher used to say—and capable of giving a worthy lead in life. In this respect, also, the academic philosopher is mostly found

wanting, for he is generally occupied with problems of Western philosophy which have ceased to trouble even the West, and which have no roots in Indian life. As a result, academic philosophers have a very limited sphere of influence, confined to their pupils, many of whom even seek private light and inspiration from the philosophical works of modern men of realization, especially those like Vivekananda, Ramatirtha, and Aurobindo, who had a Western education and could interpret Indian ideas in the modern light and reorganize them to meet the challenge of the West. The influence of the philosophical teachings of such spiritual leaders is much wider and deeper, and laymen as well as some academic philosophers resort to them. Western ideas contained in such teachings have a much greater chance, therefore, of being absorbed into Indian life and thought.

This is what has happened. Even during the earlier part of the last century, Raja Rammohan Roy (1774-1833)—the first all-round educational, social, political, and religious reformer of modern India—applied his gigantic intellect and synthetic mind to the discovery of the essentials of the great religions, particularly Hinduism, Islam, and Christianity, which were then in conflict in his country. He patiently mastered Arabic, Hebrew, Syriac, Greek, English, Sanskrit, and other languages, studied the original scriptures and their developments, and became convinced that, shorn of their accretions, the great religions taught monotheism, which could be a universal religion and could be approached through the respective scriptures correctly interpreted. He lived this faith and reflected it through his powerful religious personality; and around 1830 he founded the Brāhma Samāj, with close alliance with the Unitarians, and inculcated a theistic version of Upaniṣadic philosophy, denouncing all distinctions of caste and all forms of idolatry.[14] This liberalized and universalized school of Hinduism founded in Bengal, with its sister organization, Prārthanā Samāj of Bombay, saved many an Anglicized or ostracized intellectual from social tyranny, as well as from the necessity of a formal change of faith.

14. See B. N. Seal, *Rammohun—The Universal Man* (Calcutta : Sādhāraṇ Brāhma Samāj, n.d.)

Among the many eminent persons who belonged to thi faith two deserve special mention here, Sir B. N. Seal anc Rabindra Nath Tagore, both of whom came to admir Rammohan as their hero, and were deeply influenced by hi synthetic spirit and universal outlook. Gifted with an unusually capable and versatile intellect, Seal (1864-1938) no only acquired, with the initial help of his erudite British missionary teachers, a profound knowledge of European philosophy, science, and literature, but also achieved later, while teaching philosophy, an equally thorough scholarship in Indian philosophy by private study, with the occasional help of Sanskrit scholars. The reorganization of philosophical studies, with an exhaustive syllabus in Western philosophy, provision for Indian philosophy at the higher stages, and encouragement of research in comparative philosophy in Calcutta, Mysore, and some other universities influenced by him represented the tangible results of Seal's synthetic outlook; and the pattern still continues.

The influence of Tagore (1861-1941), the son of a saintly leader of the Brāhma Samāj, is as wide as modern Indian culture—renascent literature, art, music, dance, drama, and education, to all of which he applied his creative genius and dedicated his life at his experimental school, Santiniketan, which has now developed into a small international university, called Visvabharati.[15] Though apparently engaged in secular activities, his deep spiritual fervour and dedication, manifested through all of them, cast a mystic halo around his personality. Though he was entirely self-educated, his inquisitive mind and uncommon intelligence enabled him to read freely and assimilate ideas from all sources, Eastern and Western. In his poems—the English translation of a selection of which won him the Nobel Prize—and in his discourses to students at the school chapel we find a wonderful synthesis of the Upaniṣadic ideas of *Brahman*, man, and Nature with Western ideas of personality, organic unity in diversity, biological evolution, emphasis on human values, organized social work, and service of God through the service of suffering humanity.

He had unbounded regard for Jesus and his true followers, like his life-long friend, Charles Andrews, and often cited Christ to illustrate the law of higher human evolution: Die to live. But it is only in the English version of his poems, and in his few English works, like *Personality*, *The Religion of Man*, etc., that a Western scholar can trace the influence of Wordsworth. Shelley, Goethe, Christian theists, Hegelian idealists, and Western science. He mastered and moulded his mother tongue with such superb ease, and re-interpreted and expanded the meanings of the teachings of the Vedas, Upaniṣads, Buddhism, the medieval mystics of India, and others in such a way that even alien ideas would flow naturally from these Indian ideas, and the Indian words would betray no strain, no foreign flavour. It was a real synthesis achieved through the life of a genius constantly inspired by a spiritual humanism which rejoiced at all true and noble expressions of Man in men, refused to believe that "the twin spirits of the East and the West, the Mary and Martha, can never meet to make perfect the realization of truth."[16]

It is necessary to mention here a paradox which one perceives not only in Tagore but also in other spiritual, and even political, leaders who have deeply influenced modern India. Their internationalism stems from their nationalism. They believe, to speak in terms of similes, that every circle, however wide, must have a centre; the Indian banyan tree must first grow stout and deep roots in its own soil to be able to spread over acres and acres. Rootless universalism and cosmopolitanism are really sham and hollow. Under foreign domination they came to realize the truth of the Upaniṣadic teaching that the higher faculties could not flourish unless the gross body sustained by food (*annamaya*) was taken care of. The culture and spirituality of the people could not thrive unless the material and socio-political basis was built soundly; and culture itself could not be borrowed but must grow from indigenous roots first. Hence, they emphasized the necessity of revitalizing all the roots of life, so that it could expand and assimilate all good things from the outside. They were

16. *The Religion of Man* (London : George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1931), p. 178.

particularly proud that India through the ages had been the confluence of almost all the races, cultures, and religions of the world, and had already achieved syntheses in many fields; and, by re-emphasizing that synthetic outlook and the Vedāntic faith in the presence of *Brahman* in all, India could expand its nationalism towards internationalism.

The spirit of religious synthesis and absorption of alien ideas were not confined to the Anglicized urban society in which Tagore was born and bred, but penetrated even into the life and teachings of Ramakrishna Paramahamsa (1836-1886), an illiterate, orthodox, rural *brāhmin* who began life as a temple priest, was initiated successively into Tāntric, Vaiṣṇava, and Advaita methods of realization, which he attained along every path, and then tried with equal success the Islamic and Christian methods of worship, and declared ultimately that all paths lead to God. His God-intoxicated personality and simple oral teachings spread their influence far and wide, but took practical shape in his greatest disciple, Vivekananda (1862-1902), who had a brilliant mind, a powerful physique, and a thorough Western education in a missionary college, but also studied Vedānta and other important scriptures and acquired through long years of solitary meditation great spiritual conviction. Like the Buddha and Śaṁkara, he left the cloister to serve man—the "God in man" (*nara-nārāyaṇa*), as he called him, and this name has caught on since. But he followed in many respects the plans and methods of the Christian missionary. He was, in fact, the first and greatest of modern Hindu missionaries. The network of Vedānta missions, educational institutions, hospitals, organizations for carrying on relief work during flood, famine, and other calamities which exists now in many parts of India and abroad is due to his inspiration. It follows the good example of Christianity in lifting Hinduism out of lethargy and suffering. Like Tagore, he also wanted Western science, purged of its materialistic abuse, to be combined with Indian spirituality, purged of its degenerate negative attitude and lethargic indifference to the world. He gave a positive, dynamic, and philanthropic turn to the Advaita Vedānta, the essence of which, and of other religions, too, he discovered to be "the

divinity inherent in man and his capacity for indefinite evolution."[17] With his spiritual fire, sharp intellect sharpened further by the study of the Western rationalist and scientific literature of his times, and with his modern, universalistic outlook, and especially with the prestige he had won for India at the Parliament of Religions at Chicago, Vivekananda whipped up pride, self-respect, and the spirit of service. He aroused also a sense of shame for all social vices and degenerate trends that had eclipsed the country's great culture. He was an all-round awakener; and, though he died at the age of forty, he has been a great inspiration, not only to religious, social, and political workers, but also to academic philosophers.

The influence of the West can be seen even in an apparently orthodox and reactionary form of Hinduism, the Ārya Samāj, founded by Swami Dayananda (1824-1883), who revived the Vedic rituals, refuted Jainism and Buddhism as well as Vedāntic monism, and formulated a realistic, pluralistic philosophy of God, Nature, and Man. Like the Christian missionary, he denounced castes, idolatry, and all other religions; proselytized the Moslems, Christians, and others; trained missionaries; and founded educational institutions and humanitarian organizations. This militant type of Hinduism gathered into its fold a large number of backward and socially repressed persons. It thus became a formidable rival to Western missionaries, and tried to beat them with their own methods. But its humanitarian services were all beneficial to the community. It broadened the base of Hinduism by making entry and re-entry possible, and unified its thousands of followers—drawn mostly from the most conservative, uneducated people—into a casteless, close-knit, self-confident, energetic community.

On the higher intellectual plane, none of the religious thinkers or mystics has exerted more increasing influence today than Sri Aurobindo (1872-1950). He was educated, from the age of seven to twenty-one, in England, obtained a first class Tripos in Classics at Cambridge, and had no knowledge of his mother tongue or Indian thought (except through some English works of Max Müller) until he returned to India

17. Romain Rolland, *The Life of Vivekananda and the Universal Gospel*, E. F. Malcolm-Smith, trans. (Mayavati : Advaita Ashram, 1931), p. 41.

as a teacher of English. He thus had an entirely Western mental background and upbringing, except for a burning patriotism which made him apply his prodigious intellect to the study of the Indian spiritual classics, and which, on the other hand, led him to a short spell of revolutionary politics ending in imprisonment, after which he concentrated his entire attention and energy on study, spiritual realization, and writing, confining himself to a secluded living room for forty years until he died. He drew into one mighty focus the wisdom of the East and the West, ancient and modern, and tried to achieve by integral Yoga a hitherto unattained level of consciousness which would divinize the entire human being—physical, vital and mental—and make it a fit vehicle for the work of the Divine in this world.

Integral Yoga is based on a comprehensive idea of the Supreme Divine or the Absolute, which transcends all that our mind can grasp and yet expresses itself through all these partial and inadequate manifestations. It is, therefore, both transcendent and immanent, impersonal and personal, quiescent and dynamic. The Divine enjoys manifesting itself in all finite forms, and through the gradual evolution of matter, life, and mind, it shows an ascending tendency. In man the upward urge is clearly manifest in his partially fulfilled aspiration for physical, intellectual, and moral perfection, and for freedom, harmony, and abiding happiness. Prophets, gnostics, mystics, and saints of the past had felt the upward urge in the human soul, and had generally tried to raise the soul above imperfection and mundane evils by merging it with the Divine *(conceived as the Transcendent) through consciousness of* identity, or by loving contemplation and devotion to the Divine, conceiving it as the worthiest object of adoration, or by faithful performance of duties, surrendering the self-will to the Divine Will, or by some other method of transcending the world and escaping into some passive state. Though these various methods have their merits, and have helped human progress, the world's unresolved problems, strife, and discord demand a more radical and comprehensive spiritual regeneration—an attempt to help man rise a stage higher in evolution, from the present state in which, even in the best man, one-sided mental

culture is aborted by the downward pull of the selfish cravings, impulses, and demands of the lower nature, to the state of a superman in whom the physical, vital, sensuous, and mental forces would be completely integrated and harmoniously cultivated, through knowledge, love, and work, treating the body, life, and mind as the expressions of the Divine Force and Will, and surrendering the egoistic will to the Divine.

This, in brief, is synthetic or integral Yoga, which is intended to raise not only the higher mind but also the body and other lower components of man to the Divine by total and integrated effort dedicated to, and in co-operation with, the Divine purpose. The success of this effort is marked by an integral or "supramental" consciousness of the Divine as reality, consciousness-force, and delight, with each aspect of which the divinized man feels completely at one, so that he can live and work in the world as a divine power and light, in unison with the Divine Will. While Aurobindo was leading a concentrated, cloistered life, there gathered around him, at Pondicherry (then a French pocket in South India), a growing group of like-minded spiritual aspirants attracted by his writings and challenging mission, and drawn from almost all faiths, lands and professions. A "gnostic" community composed of diverse talents, led and organized by a French lady accepted as the "Mother", has thus grown there to carry on the spiritual adventure. Even casual visitors are impressed by the all-sided, integrated activities of a thousand aspirants working in peace and harmony. A dynamic poise, evolved there, is one tangible fruit of the philosophy of Aurobindo—a synthesis of the West and the East. Outside the esoteric community, he attracted first the Westernized intellectuals of mystic bent capable of studying his works written in a scholarly English style. But the publication of his diverse writings on education, culture, society, politics, etc., has been arousing more general interest, whereas his extensive philosophical works, such as the *Essays in the Gītā*, *The Synthesis of Yoga*, and particularly *The Life Divine*,[18] have gradually penetrated the academic sphere—in an increasing number of dissertations, courses, conference

18. These works are available from Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, South India.

papers, and journal articles.

His original interpretation of the Vedas, the Upaniṣads, and the Gītā, his constructive criticism of the dominant Western and Eastern philosophical achievements, and his own integral approach have proved interesting and provocative because they apparently stem from indigenous roots, though they spread far beyond. He has an illuminating and persuasive message for the re-orientation of every sphere of Indian, and human, life.

But, though he is firmly rooted in Indian soil—particularly in the earlier creative ideas of the Vedas and the Upaniṣads—not only the language, but also the form and technique of Aurobindo's writings are Western. The influence of the Western gnostics, absolute idealists, emergent-evolutionists, perfectionists, and others can also be discerned to different extents. Also, it can hardly be denied that under the impact of the Western conditions prevailing in modern India, Aurobindo, like other thinkers, searched, in the ancient indigenous sources, for the neglected roots of a dynamic, realistic, world-elevating, yet spiritual, philosophy which could check both asceticism and materialism which threatened India and defeated the purpose of human life.

V

Let us pass now to the socio-political sphere of modern Indian life, and see how, through the struggle for freedom, and for the reorganization of corporate life after freedom, a new philosophy of individual, society, state, and human relations has also been developing under the impact of Western thought. The struggle for freedom developed roughly through three stages: constitutional agitation, a secret and violent revolutionary movement, and the non-violent (non-co-operation and civil disobedience) movement led by Mahatma Gandhi. The first two were directly and explicitly influenced by Western ideas of political equality, liberty, and fraternity, and of self-government. The French, American, Italian, Irish, and Russian revolutions were the guiding examples. Rousseau,

Tilak[19] and Aurobindo sought the support of Indian thought for a dynamic life of selfless work, including violent fight if considered a duty. Both came thus to write elaborate expositions of the *Gītā*. But politics, war, and diplomacy were regarded as belonging to the sphere of prudence, tact, and national convenience, rather than to any universal sphere of human morality, not to speak of spirituality, which was cloistered apart.

The religious consciousness of renascent India had already awakened to the contradiction between its Vedāntic belief in the inherent divinity of man and its indifference to the slavery and misery of the people around. It was even sharply voiced by Vivekananda: "Religion is not for empty bellies." "Let the study of the Vedānta and the practice of meditation be left over to the future life. Let this body be dedicated to the service of others."[20] "If you want to find God, serve man."[21] Harking back to the Buddha, he solemnly wished: "May I be born and reborn again and suffer a thousand miseries if I am able to worship the only God in whom I believe, the sum total of all souls, and above all, my God the wicked, my God the afflicted, my God the poor of all races."[22]

Gandhi (1869—1948) devoted his entire life to the task of seeking God through the service of man suffering from political subjugation and its consequent evils. He, therefore, applied to the political struggle the principles of self-purification demanded of an aspirant for spiritual salvation, such as non-violence, truth, non-stealing, chastity, and non-possession of what is not absolutely necessary. He thus brought morality and religion down to practical politics, and raised the latter to a higher level. With moral insight he discovered that political, social, and economic oppression had its root in the moral vices of the oppressed—their lethargy, disunity, fear, and active or passive co-operation with the oppressor. Truthful heart-searching and self-purification could alone cut at the very root of all exploitation, and build up lasting concord and strength making present and future exploitation impossible. With

19. His celebrated *Bhagavad-Gītā Rahasya* was published in Poona in 1915.
20. Romain Rolland, *op. cit*., p. 29.
21. *Ibid.*
22. *Ibid.*

spiritual insight he saw the God in the oppressed and the degraded, and tried to rouse Him by his own purity, love, truthfulness, and devoted service, initiating a multiple programme of social, communal, educational, and economic reform and reorganization on a moral basis. On the other hand, he saw the God in the rulers and exploiters, and tried to rouse Him also, with the force of the same moral virtues that he embodied, to a vivid realization of the truth of the suffering caused, the demoralization He had suffered, and the inevitable doom of any human relation not based on a moral foundation. With unflinching devotion to truth, and with love for all and hatred for none, he tried to convince both the ruler and the ruled of the historical truth of the mounting spiral of suspicion, fear, and violence that eternally go on as the result of violent suppression and violent retaliation. Espousing a true cause, after closely and dispassionately examining all facts, he would first try peaceful negotiation and moral persuasion, and then withdrawal of all co-operation, and ultimately he would resort to "civil disobedience"—disobeying inequitable laws, exposing himself and his disciplined followers to untold reprisal and suffering without bitterness, hoping to melt thereby the heart of the adversary, and paralyse, as well, the regime that depended on obedient co-operation. He would be morally vigilant at every step, and call off the movement if he detected any deception and violence.

This new non-violent moral technique of redressing wrong in any sphere was called by Gandhi "*Satyāgraha*" (sticking to the truth). Its early success in South Africa in repealing discriminatory laws and, later, in India in the attainment of political freedom, made Gandhi famous. But he himself was humble and truthful enough to feel and say that his work was only a series of experiments with truth in limited spheres, and he fervently hoped that, if man were to progress further on the path of evolution and not simply repeat history, he should try moral principles in other spheres of human relations with the scientific spirit of discovery of truth.[21] The sphere of such moral experiments is as wide as human relations, ranging from

the domestic to the international.

The land-gift (*bhūdāna*) movement now being led by Vinoba Bhave for the securing of voluntary gifts of land for the landless villagers is a new line of experiment in moral persuasion in the economic sphere. This scholarly, but highly practical, disciple of Gandhi had dedicated his life for thirty years to quiet village uplift work. But in 1951 he felt impelled to evolve some Gandhian technique to meet a violent situation created in Telangana by the communists' plundering of the rich for the poor and the Government's repressing them with police force. Since then he has been going about India on foot, from village to village, enlisting thousands of voluntary co-workers, and begging lands for the poor. He has secured nearly five million acres by moral persuasion. The movement has produced an atmosphere of "liquidation of private property by consent" in about 2,500 villages in each of which all proprietors have relinquished their rights in favour of the village, which is to work like a family. It is an experiment in progress, but increasingly gathering momentum.

Though the concepts of man and human destiny, and the moral principles which Gandhi and Vinoba accept and apply, can be traced mostly to ancient Indian thought, they are not simply revivals, but the products of Indian and Western ideas synthesized through personal life and mass practice. As Gandhi himself says in his *Autobiography* and several other places, Tolstoy's interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount, especially in respect of non-resistance of evil, Thoreau's conception of passive resistance, Arnold's writings on the Buddha and the *Gītā*, Ruskin's *Unto This Last* (inculcating anti-industrialist ideas, the necessity of bread-labour, and seeking the good of the individual through the good of all)—all ran into his formative mind together while he was being educated in England. It was his cherished dream even then to synthesize the teachings of Buddha, Christ, and the *Gītā* in his life. The way he synthesized them with his moral genius was unpredictable, however, as is every real synthesis. The Western conflict between capitalism and communism made Gandhi find out, with the help of Western thinkers (like Ruskin and Tolstoy) and reinterpreted by Indian thinkers, a way of escape through small,

worker-owned decentralized industries, avoiding heavy centralized industries which caused the conflict in the West. He also advocated, like Ruskin, equal wages for all kinds of labour; and even the abolition of private property, which Vinoba is now emphasizing. Gandhi and Vinoba, therefore, come very near socialism and communism in some respects. But there is *all* the difference between non-violence and violence, the spiritual and the material outlooks.

The Gandhian movement, which has stirred the nation, has also thrown up some live problems for academic philosophy. Gandhi and Vinoba have firmly instilled into the people's mind the thought that the inherent divinity in all *men logically implies that there should be economic, political,* and social equality for all; that all should be treated with dignity, and, therefore, force should have no place in any ideal organization; that democracy based on force is a contradiction; that the spiritual destiny of the individual should never be allowed to be eclipsed by the State or any other organization, which should all be treated as means; that all means should be as pure as the ultimate spiritual end; that the ideal of the State and other non-violent organizations should be the greatest good of all (as distinguished from the utilitarian ideal); and so on. These have been demanding thorough philosophical inquiry and discussion, and giving a new direction to Indian philosophy, much closer to the life of the country and of the modern world. *The solution of these new problems also* requires Indian thinkers to turn again to the West, as much as *to the East, for the mind of an academic philosopher of modern* India is already saturated with Western ideas. Nothing will satisfy him until his whole mind has approved of it. Moreover, the new problems themselves have some of their roots in the West.

world which is growing by mutual influence and interrelation. It also shows how the East and the West have begun to meet, and have even mingled in real synthesis in some great synthetic personalities, their teachings, and their public activities, all of which have been nourishing the growth of modern Indian philosophy.

Our Debt to China, Japan and Other Eastern Neighbours

India's subjugation to the British rule was not an unmixed evil. A direct benefit has been the unique opportunity she has had of an intimate acquaintance with the new *lingua franca* of the West, and through it with Western science and technology—all of which are proving immensely helpful to independent India in the work of building up her new national life as also in determining her place among nations. Even in the matter of cultural recovery, India has derived substantial help from Western scholars. These savants have devoted their lives to the study, encouragement and propagation of Oriental cultures. In many cases it is they who have also rediscovered for us the intimate interrelation among the Orientals.

During the last two centuries the glamour of the West blinded us to what we could learn about and from our closer neighbours of the East, particularly China and Japan, with whom our ancient forbears established close cultural ties in spite of great difficulties of communication. Paradoxical as it might appear, during this period we adored those very people who, as a rule, had scant regard for our culture, and we neglected those who looked up to India for cultural inspiration for more than a thousand years.

It is true that at the turn of the present century nationalist India became interested in Japan, and for some time Japan became a model to be followed. But it was not Japanese culture that attracted India. Japan, the defeater of an incredibly large Western country and the manufacturer of incredibly cheap goods, attracted the admiration of India, as an example of how quickly an Eastern country could become Westernized, industrialized and militarily equipped, and become able to expel the Western powers. It is true, again, that during the last decade a section of Indians has become unusually interested in China. But here, again, it is not for China's own traditional culture, but for the recent Westernized

form of China which is believed to have achieved economic salvation overnight by adopting Russian methods.

But beneath these passing hues of borrowed colours that fascinate the unwary, there are some abiding elements of great human culture in China, Japan and other Eastern countries which attract the admiration of the wise people of all lands—people who can rise a little above petty barriers and are, therefore, able to appreciate, as men, the great achievements of their fellow beings in other regions of the world. With such a catholic interest, generations of European and American scholars have devoted their lives to the study of the languages, art, architecture, social institutions, political systems, philosophical schools, religious movements, etc., of China, Japan and other far eastern lands. They have translated the great classics, written histories, criticisms and appreciations of the different phases of the cultures of these countries and thereby enriched their own languages, literatures and cultures. But we Indians have lagged far, far behind.

Yet, even from a narrow self-regarding point of view, we should have been more interested in China, Japan and some other countries around us which studied our ancient Indian culture, wonderfully mastered Sanskrit, faithfully translated many of our great classics and preserved them with great zeal—so much so that some of these, lost to India, can now be recovered from Tibetan, Chinese and Japanese sources. Moreover, while Buddhism vanished from India, it was preserved, cultivated and developed in diverse pure and mingled forms in these countries. The most reliable versions of some of the great Buddhist classics can be had, not in India, which has just now begun to feel proud of her once-deserted child, but in these countries. With the decline of Buddhism in India, Brahminical India became progressively indifferent to her Buddhist neighbours. It was natural that this rebuff should have cooled down their ardour a little. But this was on the surface only: deep down they continued as devoted admirers of the Indian lore.

It is amazing to see how Japan, preoccupied as it has been with the process of so-called Westernization during the last two centuries, has kept up her interest in Indian culture. Here are

a few instances. The great Japanese scholar and saint, Jiun Sonza (whose 150th death anniversary was solemnly observed in 1953) devoted his long life of 87 years to the study of Sanskrit, the writing of books for facilitating the study of Sanskrit, the editing and translating of many Buddhist texts and the writing of independent treatises on allied subjects. The number of his books, which are being collected and published, runs to over three hundred. The Japanese Association of Indian and Buddhist Studies (Nihon-Indogaku-Bukkyogaku-Kai), founded around 1950 (with its headquarters at the University of Tokyo, Japan), has been working so energetically that it meets twice a year at different seats of learning to read and discuss about eighty papers written by professors from about twenty universities on such varied topics related to ancient, medieval and modern Indian culture as : Mahāyāna Thought in the Avadāna; the influences of Indian grammar on Tibetan; Bhāmaha and Daṇḍin; the Mṛcchakaṭika; Buddhi in Sānkhya Philosophy; the Adṛṣṭa theory of Vaiśeṣika; the date of Kumārajīva; Kaniṣka and the Sarvāstivādin; Śraddhā or faith in Nāgārjuna; the Tāntric form of Bodhicitta; Caste and Education; Viśākha and Śravaṇā (stars), etc., and even Premchand *(the modern Hindi writer), and the religious philosophy* of Devendranath Tagore. This Association had published earlier, for the guidance of scholars, an extensive bibliography containing the names (and other particulars) of books and journal articles on the different aspects of Indian and Buddhist cultures published in different countries and languages. The wonderful energy, versatile scholarly interest and the capacity for sustained and methodical research that our Japanese colleagues show in respect of our own culture put us to shame.

We blush to think of the debt of gratitude which we owe to our neighbours—Ceylon, Burma, Java, Sumatra, Siam, Cambodia, Tibet, Korea and, particularly, to China and Japan—who preserved, assimilated and gave new expressions to some of the finest elements of Indian culture which India once neglected and banished. The debt was not only not repaid, but was not even sufficiently acknowledged. The only palpable recognition of this debt is found perhaps first in recent times, in Rabindranath Tagore's cultural tour in these coun-

tries with a band of scholars and artists, his attempt to exchange scholars and teachers, and his founding of the department of Sino-Indian studies, Cheena Bhavana, at Santiniketan. Outside of Santiniketan, the visit of Tagore and his devoted companions created among the educated Indians a general consciousness of a greater India. But the pity is that this generated only a pride for what India had given to the world, rather than an humble desire to learn what we still can take from our neighbours. Cultural vanity is not a sign of real culture; here self-complacence causes stagnation.

The time has come when we should ask ourselves such honest questions as : Have we translated even a single great Chinese or Japanese work into any of our Indian languages during the thousand years, while China and Japan rendered so many of ours into their languages and while the Western scholars have enriched their languages and cultures by translating dozens of those classics? Yet, who can deny the sheer intrinsic value of the wise teachings of Confucius, Mo Tzu, Yang Chu, Mencius, Lao Tzu, the great Zen masters, and others who stand at the very peak of human civilization? For political wisdom, personal and social ideals, aesthetic sensitivity, unparalleled common sense and spiritual profundity, we can profitably turn to these great masters. By studying them we shall be able not only to repay a part of our long outstanding debt, but also benefit ourselves and our culture and the generations to come.

The selfless scholarly devotion of Professor Walter Liebenthal sets an example in this direction which Indian scholars can follow.

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